Australian
PENTHOUSE
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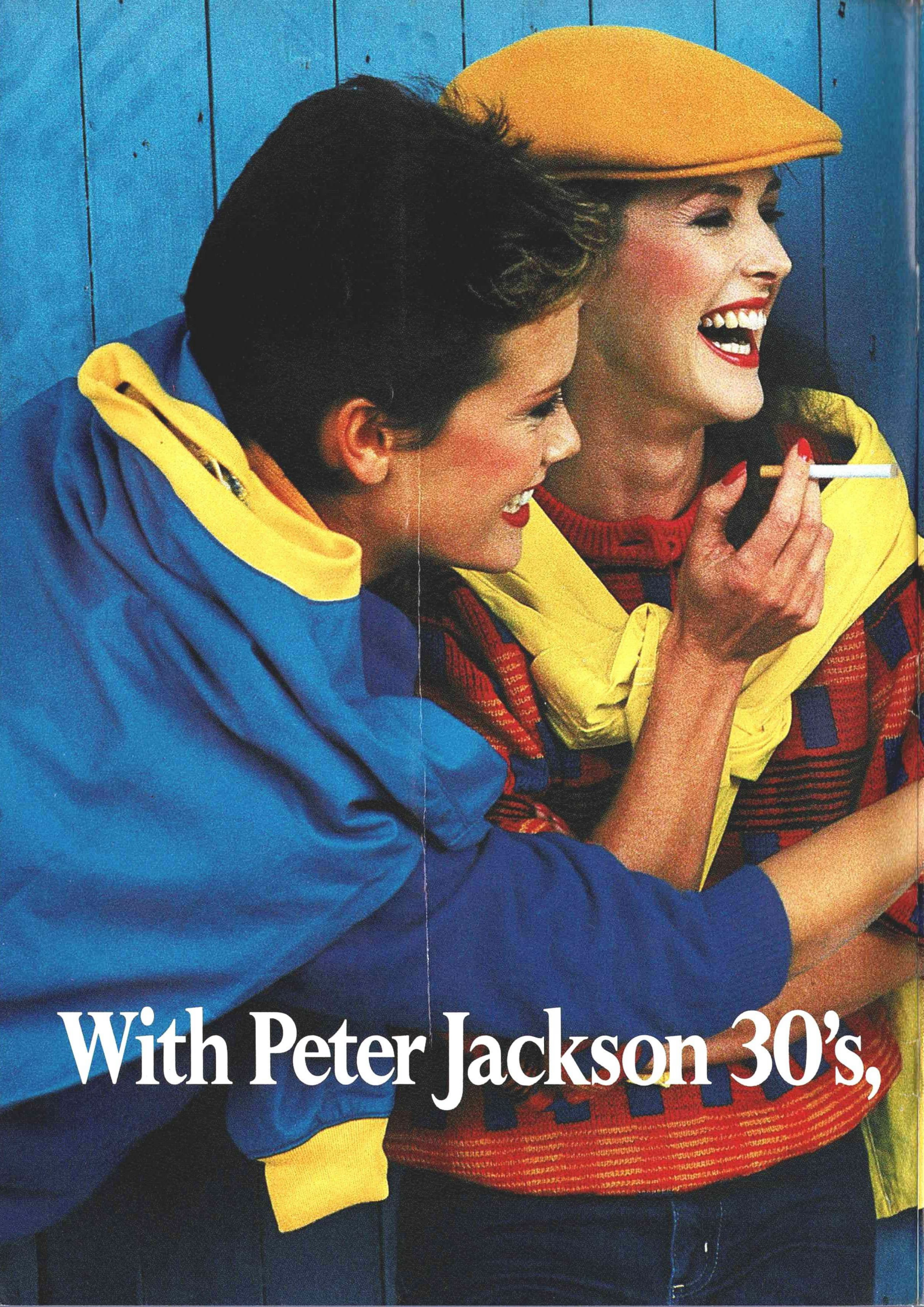
NOVEMBER 1984
FIRE POWER: THE BURNING OF AUSTRALIA
FALCONRY IN THE EIGHTIES
HOW TO BEAT YOUR MATES AT POOL
SLIM DUSTY INTERVIEW
THE YEAR OF MEL GIBSON
MOTORING: FORMULA MAGIC
BIKES: BRUTE FORCE
PLUS THE LATEST CLIFF HARDY STORY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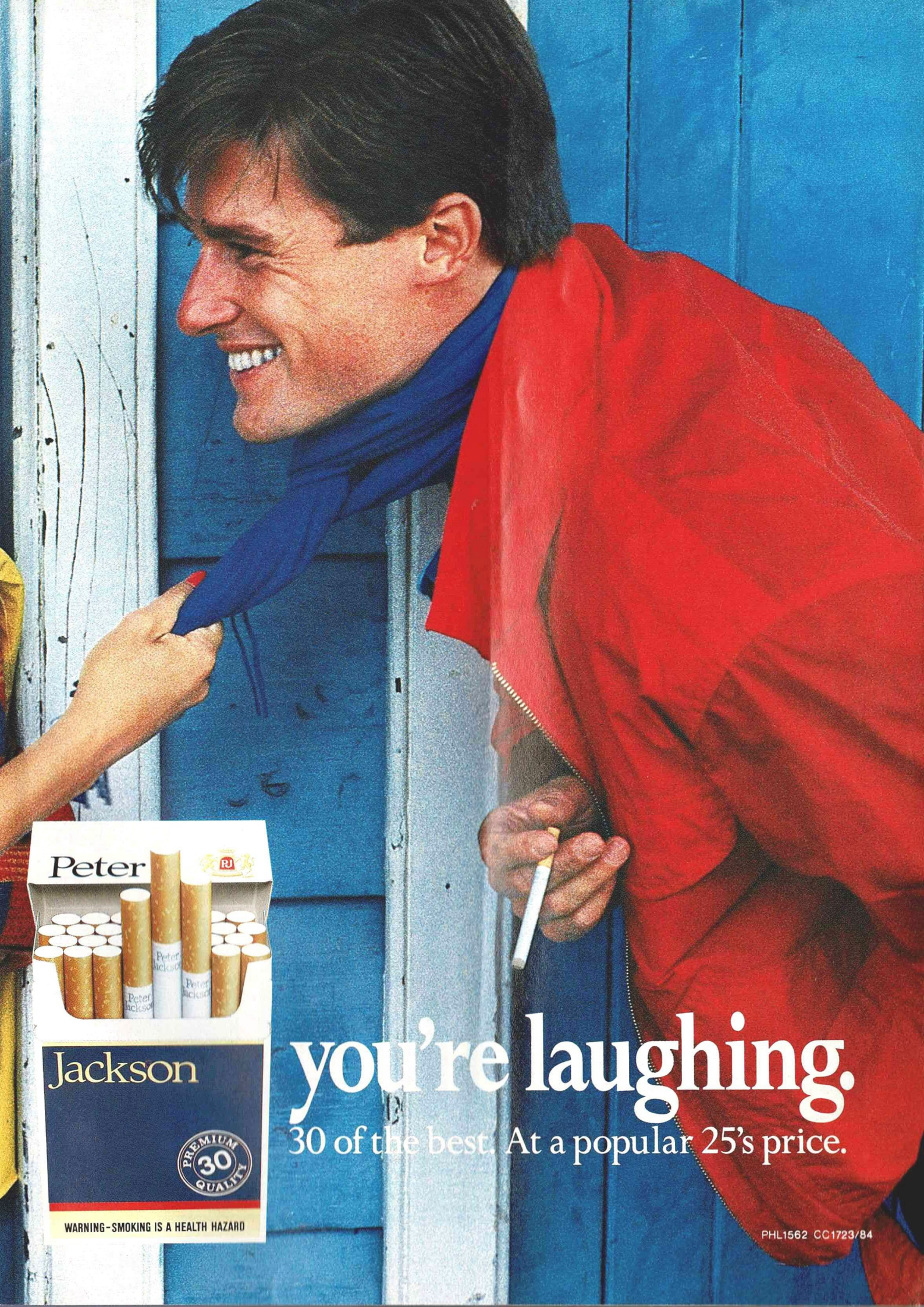
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Australian
PENTHOUSE

The International Magazine for Australian Men/Vol 5 No 11/November 1984

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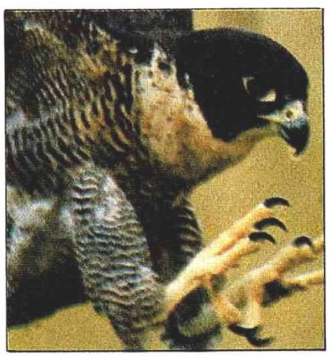
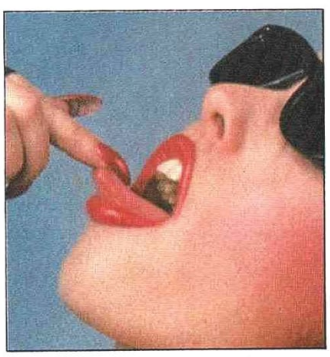


Birds In The Hand

Dirty Pool

The Big Pinch



Indian Giver

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Australian
PENTHOUSE
THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE FOR MEN

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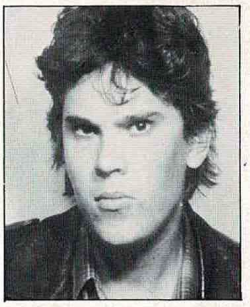
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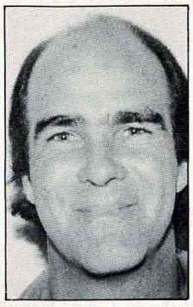
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GLENN FORD

PETER SIMONS

PETER CORRIS

GREG HUNTER

HOUSECALL

FIRE POWER
Thousands of bushfires are reported across Australia every year, and no-one doubts that this country is built to burn. But our amateurish and antiquated approach to firefighting points to an almost certain repeat of the Ash Wednesday fires of February 16, 1983 — the worst in recorded history. **Phil Ackman's** dramatic description of that dreadful event is a stark reminder of the work that needs to be done if Australians are to be protected from the most terrifying of all natural disasters. Turn to page 34.

DIRTY POOL
The game of pool, as played in pubs all over this country, is actually a violent contact sport. Having a good time in the pub pool arena means learning how to win, and how to emerge in one piece. Staff writer **Greg Hunter,** a survivor of numerous nasty pool predicaments, provides the answers in a comprehensive guide which includes hints on hustling and tactical tips from the maestro, Eddie Charlton. Dirty Pool, illustrated by **Peter Meldrum,** starts on page 78.

THE YEAR OF MEL GIBSON
For Australia's number one sex symbol, 1984 has been the big one. Mel Gibson is just about the hottest property in Hollywood — a town he describes as "a great place to stay away from." **Paul Mansfield's** incisive profile reveals a man who delights in thumbing his nose at the star system and telling it like it is. Turn to page 58.

BIRDS IN THE HAND
The ancient art of falconry has made a comeback in the Eighties. **Ford Kristo** captures in words and photos the history of man's struggle to harness the most majestic of all animals, and describes how this once brutal "sport" is now used in Australia to protect birds of prey rather than train them to kill on command. Kristo's story starts on page 52.

SLIM DUSTY INTERVIEW
Slim Dusty is as much a part of the Australian landscape as Ayers Rock and the Gibson Desert. But he's a lot harder to track down. **Roger Crosthwaite** trapped the country music legend when he was in Sydney promoting a movie about his life, and talked with him about what it's like to spend a lifetime "on the road." The interview, starting on page 128, reveals why Slim Dusty is known as "The Man Who Is Australia." **Peter Simons** shot the photo.

THE BIG PINCH
"I felt a pang when I yanked out the pin that held the card to the door. Cliff Hardy Investigations was out of business." Fortunately for *Penthouse* readers, **Peter Corris** allows the downtrodden detective to climb off the floor and throw himself into another all-Aussie adventure. This time around, Hardy is hired to protect the life of a celluloid superbitch under threat from an insane caller. This is one case where the gumshoe doesn't get the girl. **Glen Ford** created the illustration on page 98.

PENTHOUSE VALUE SHOPPE
Penthouse readers can now do their Christmas shopping by mail at the exclusive *Penthouse* Value Shoppe. Turn to the centre pages and find out how. A free holiday in Bali, to be won by one lucky reader, will make it doubly worth your while.

Flavour and mildness rolled into one.

New Drum Mild.

The flavour and satisfaction of Drum, now in a mild version too.

BDP(S)DRM19

PENTHOUSE FEEDBACK

Is a dialogue between readers and editors concerning the editorial content of Australian *Penthouse*— its aspirations and its areas of interest. Letters for publication should carry name and address (in capitals), although these will be withheld on request. Send to Penthouse Feedback, Australian Penthouse Box 42, Cammeray, NSW 2062. Views published are not necessarily endorsed editorially.

It's eight, mate

With reference to Peter McKay's article on the Japanese turbos, Cheap Thrills, in August *Penthouse*: I thought a lot of his comments were woopy doo. Who wants to pay $10,000 for a turboed tin can that does 15.9 for a 400-metre dash, when anyone with brains can buy a nice hotted-up Ford or Holden for $3000 that will blow away any of that turboed Jap crap? As far as I'm concerned, most of these four-cylinder turbos are a waste of time. They're just Scalectrix with Black and Decker engines. — *Mark Konemann, Matraville, NSW*

Hard sell

The article Car Wars in your July issue was the most well written and informative article ever published in *Penthouse*. Having spent the last four years in the direct selling industry, I find any article relating to salesmanship of great interest.

The two words which came to mind after reading of the disgraceful tactics used by both new and used car salesmen were "amazing" and "deplorable." I find it bewildering that state governments have not established tighter controls over car yard conmen.

Someone once said that some of the best salesmen in the world are in jail because they couldn't tell the difference between being good salesmen and conmen. After reading Greg Hunter's article, I'm left with the impression that they have all been released and are working in car yards across Australia. — *J.T. Dinter, Auburn, NSW*

Articles like Greg Hunter's Car Wars (July *Penthouse*) do little to give the consumer confidence when he buys a new or used car. Believe it or not, there are car dealers in Australia who refuse to use the tactics outlined in that story. My objection to Hunter's story is that in his last paragraph he states that every dealer resorts to these tactics and the only possible exceptions are companies selling Rolls Royces and "maybe the odd Mercedes Benz dealer." I consider this to be totally irresponsible reporting.

I am a distributor for BMW in Western Australia. I also control a dealership for BMW and Alfa Romeo in NSW and I can assure you that none of the tactics mentioned in Car Wars are used in my dealerships. I am sure that my business is not exceptional.

Helenka Antar . . . won't play footsies

The generalisations made by Mr Hunter damage an industry which has made a great deal of progress since the introduction of consumer affairs bureaux. To survive in the retail motor trade today, you must retain a degree of professionalism. If the majority of dealers operated in the manner suggested in your article, I'm sure there would be an even greater number of dissatisfied customers lodging complaints to the various consumer affairs bureaux. — *John Trivett, Auto Classic, Victoria Park, WA*

Starck reality

Walter Starck professes to have lived in north Queensland for six years and to have pursued a lifetime of coral reef research, and then proceeds to run down the educated and qualified sections of our society without supplying any references to his own qualifications in his story Why We Don't Need to Save The Barrier Reef (July *Penthouse*). Why, I don't know. He describes these authorities as "expert misinformants" and claims they know nothing of the Reef.

If it has survived for "20 to 40 million years", then why do divers from Cairns to Mackay tell me that the Reef has obviously declined during the last decade? And it continues to do so.

Turtles, dugong, crown of thorn-eating shellfish . . . the list of protected creatures goes on, because some of these so-called "expert misinformants" have learnt that prevention is better than cure. These species may not be classified as "endangered", but they are certainly not out of danger. Many of them are recovering from the ravages of commercial exploitation. Anyone who has seen the remains of a clam poacher's visit will agree that it is a pitiful sight indeed.

I am not claiming to be an authority on this subject. I am only passing on what I have been told by concerned individuals — local fishermen, marine biologists, and the people who live with the Reef — that that Reef is endangered, and that a comprehensive study of its delicate ecology is needed.

Maybe then, Mr Starck, we can "have our cake and eat it too", and not just have it slice by slice until there is nothing left but the bones of the world's biggest organism. — *Daniel Mehonoshen, Cairns, Qld*

Dr Starck is eminently qualified to comment on the state of the Barrier Reef. His qualifications include a degree in Zoology from the University of Miami and a PhD in Marine Biology from the same institution. He grew up by a coral reef, and has spent the last 25 years studying them. Starck is the author of more than 30 publications pertaining to marine science and his field work during the last 15 years has involved the study of reefs in the Caribbean Sea, and the Indian and Pacific Oceans. He is a research associate with the Australian Museum, President of the Marine Research Foundation and a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr Starck points out that his qualifications are of secondary importance to the validity of his argument and states that the reasoning behind his claim that the Reef does not need saving is verified by scientific literature on the subject. — Ed

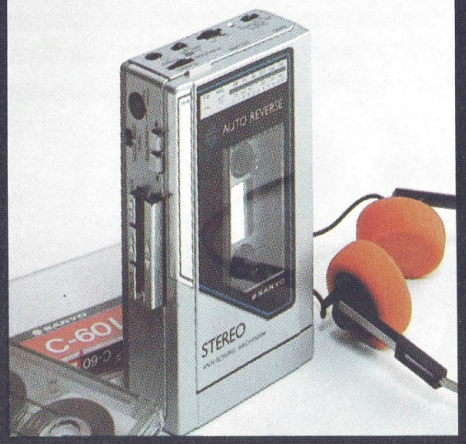
Feet first

As a dedicated admirer of the fairer sex I feel I must congratulate you on your August Pet Of The Month, Helenka Antar. She is quite delectable and another glimpse of her would not go astray. One query: Why was Helenka, and many other recent Pets, photographed with their shoes on? — *D.J., Mt Morgan, Qld*

Giants in portable Sound

When it comes to portable sound Sanyo has a Giant range.

SPORTSTER MG95



LITTLE MINI MS300K

CUBIC M7755F

DOUBLE CASSETTE RECORDERS MW22F

MINI & SLIM M1660F

MONO RADIO CASSETTE RECORDERS M2818F

STEREO RADIO CASSETTE RECORDERS M9870K

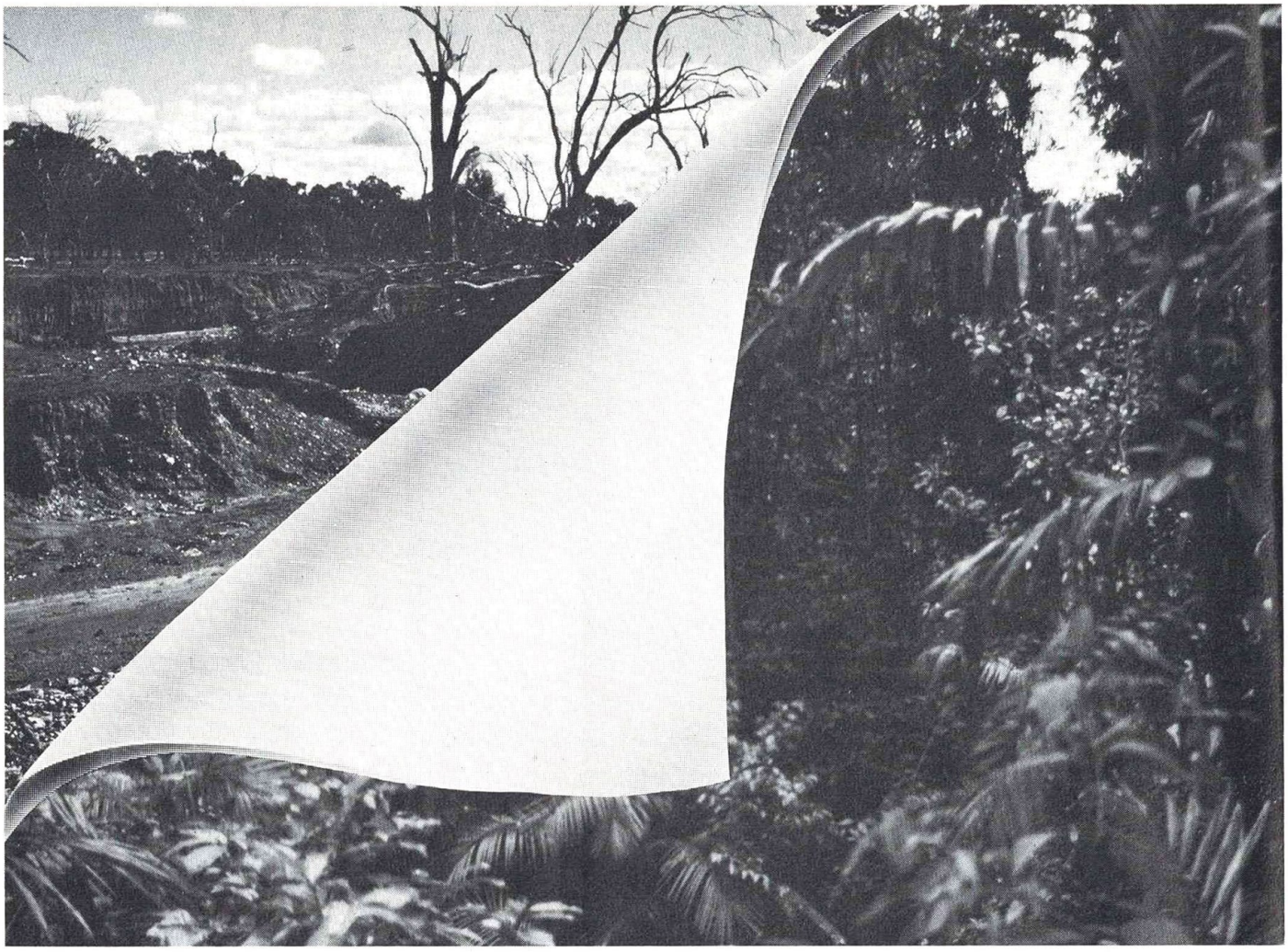
STEREO RADIO CASSETTE RECORDERS WITH DETACHABLE SPEAKERS C30

PORTABLE COMPONENT CENTRE C20

That's a Giant range for you to listen too... but that's life.

SANYO

That's Life!



SAVE THE PLANTS THAT SAVE US.

Plants have fed the world and cured its ills since time began.

Now we're destroying their habitat at the rate of 20 hectares every minute.

In Australia many of our unique plant species are in danger of extinction. Settlement, agriculture, bushfire and logging have seriously depleted many natural habitats, and with them the birds, animals and insects living there.

The World Wildlife Fund Australia was formed in 1978 to fund conservation projects for our endangered native flora and fauna. This year, World Wildlife Fund Australia is launching the International Plants Campaign, to raise funds for the conservation of Australian endangered plants, and increase community awareness of the need for conservation of our plant resources.

All over Australia there are urgent WWF Australia projects waiting your support. You can contribute in a number of ways; by becoming a WWF Australia member, by spreading the word, by cash donation, or by bequeathing money or life insurance.

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND AUSTRALIA

To: World Wildlife Fund Australia
Level 17, St. Martins Tower,
SYDNEY, NSW 2000
GPO BOX 528, SYDNEY,
NSW 2001
Telephone: (02) 29 7572

plants campaign

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☐ I would like to donate $_____

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Donations and subscriptions to WWF Australia are tax deductible.

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PENTHOUSE FORUM

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Letters become the property of Australian *Penthouse*. Send to Penthouse Forum, Box 42, Cammeray, NSW 2062.
Views published are not necessarily endorsed editorially.

The first time around

I have been reading your magazine for the past five years and have always wanted to share an experience with fellow Forum readers. My girlfriend, Shana, and I have been having sex for over a year now, and it seems to be getting better all the time. When I first met Shana, she was a virgin. I will never forget the first time we had sex.

I was spending a few days at her house helping her dad do some odd jobs. One Friday night her parents took us out to dinner. Shana was dressed to the nines. The dress she wore really showed off her 36C tits. Over dinner, Shana's father and I discussed the work that needed to be finished on the house. I smiled at Shana, who in return licked her lips and winked at me when her parents weren't looking. After dinner we returned to the house. I sleep on the lounge when I stay there, so I lay down and got comfortable. Shana's parents watched TV for a little while, then said their good-nights and went upstairs to bed.

Shana moved over to the couch and we started kissing. I then asked her why she was flirting with me at dinner. She said that she and her friend Angela had seen a porno flick in which a girl gave a guy a blowjob. She also said that I was in for a special treat. I could not believe my ears!

I reached over and kissed her and starting massaging her tits. She got up and went to see if her parents had gone to sleep. When she returned she had on a short black nightgown and a pair of matching panties. I got an instant hard-on. Shana dimmed the lights and returned to the lounge. She said that she wanted me to make love to her.

She reached over and unzipped my pants, took out my cock and began sucking on it slowly. I was in heaven. It felt so good! She started moving her tongue over it faster and faster, sometimes gagging on it. I moved on to the floor and knelt down. I ran my hands through her hair and felt her firm tits. She stopped me and said, "Come on, do it to me. I want you to screw me." I then knelt between her legs, and started sucking her pussy. It was nice and sweet; her juices were very tasty. As I began to move my finger in and out of her pussy, Shana moaned in ecstasy. She arched her back and her bum came off the floor as she reached her first orgasm. It was really nice to see her get off.

I then proceeded to get on top of her. She resisted at first, but finally agreed. I guided my cock to the opening of her virgin hole. Her black pubic hairs tickled the head of my cock. Gently I pushed it in and she let out a small cry. I put my hand on her mouth to drown out the sound so as not to wake her parents. Once I was in it felt unbelievably wonderful to be in her virgin hole. I gave a huge push and started to slowly stroke my cock in and out. Her pussy was wet and warm, and the look on her face as I screwed her was unreal. She started clawing my back with her fingernails. I was about to come.

I pulled out and positioned her in front of me, doggy style. Her round arse was staring me in the face as I spread her cheeks and shoved my cock into her hot and dripping snatch. She fucked back at me like a wild woman. I slammed my cock inside her faster and faster while I fingered her arsehole. I fucked her again doggy style and shot my load on her round buttocks. The creamy fluid dripped down her pussy and on to the floor.

We both kissed like we never had before and fell asleep in each other's arms. As for the remainder of the weekend, I finished painting the house and Shana and I had two more heavy lovemaking sessions. Shana was just beginning to learn about sex but from the outcome of our first time, I would never have known she was a virgin. — *Name and address withheld.*

Body treats

I was what you might call an "early developer": my voice changed before the other boys, and I grew faster than the others. Naturally, another feature of my anatomy grew quickly also. By the time I was 14 my penis was 15 centimetres long. Believe you me, I was the talk of the change room. Word really got around.

Sometimes, after PE, the boys in my class would show me photos from men's magazines just to stand by and watch my dick grow. I didn't know what to make of all this at the time, but I enjoyed it.

I have a sister who is one year older than me. She's good-looking and was very popular at school. But she was always shy around the house, and I seldom ever got a peek at her naked body. One Saturday afternoon during my 18th summer, while our parents were away, she had two of her girlfriends over.

Now, I didn't know this, but word about my "size" had circulated even among some of the girls in the school. My sister, Lynn and her two friends, Donna and Terri, were in Lynn's room while I was outside mowing the lawn. I didn't know that the three of them were hatching a plot.

After I had finished with the lawn, I showered and dressed into shorts and a T-shirt and went to the kitchen for a drink. Terri, a slim and very pretty girl, came in and told me that Lynn wanted to see me in her room. When I entered all three girls looked solemn. Terri said, "Lynn says you borrowed her Stones album. And now it has a scratch on it."

It was true. I admitted it and said I was sorry. I didn't have enough money to buy her another one either. "Mark," said Lynn, "Terri and Donna and I have discussed it already, and you don't have to buy me another record. But Donna and Terri want something else." Donna jumped in to speak because Lynn just couldn't bring herself to finish the request. "Yes, we were just talking, and we heard things at school about you years ago, about well, you know, what's between your legs. And we wanna see it."

You could have knocked me over with a feather. I said, "Oh gee, no, that wouldn't be a good idea," and tried to back out of the room. Then Donna said, "Mark, if you don't do as we say, Lynn's going to tell your folks about the girlie magazines hidden in your wardrobe." I didn't think anybody knew about those. She caught me and I didn't know what to say. I bit my lower lip and stood there. Donna seemed to be the ringleader and she spoke again. "So, what do you say?" I was speechless and embarrassed, but I could feel my penis stirring in my pants. "Mark, we're ready," said Donna. "Let the entertainment begin!" With that comment I could feel my dick rise.

I peeled off my shirt and threw it aside. The girls, who had been standing in different parts of the room, now gathered on the bed and sat in front of me. Donna, sensing victory, sat with her knees spread apart and slipped a finger under the waistband of her shorts. I slipped my shorts over my hips and they fell to the floor. The girls stared at me and Terri said, "Hey, now we're getting somewhere." I, too, was getting into it, so I slowed down and let them take in the view. My briefs outlined my cock and balls, so I reached down, and with my finger, outlined the length of my

shaft. As I did this my penis extended another inch and stretched the nylon even more. Now I was ready.

The girls were almost leaning forward now, watching the tip of my dick as it started to extend beyond the waistband of my underwear. They stared silently as it ballooned and stretched higher and higher until the entire head plus another few centimetres was fully exposed above my briefs. I grabbed the tip of it in one hand and levered it down like the handle of a poker machine. This drew my briefs down and showed them all I had. The briefs hit the floor and my balls bobbed free.

Their mouths opened wide for a moment and I just stood there with my cock pointing straight at them. Donna was first to make a move. "Well, my friends, I don't know about you, but I'm more than a little turned on." And with that, she began to strip. But Terri stopped her. "Wait, I've got an idea."

They had me leave the room for a moment then they called me back in. I didn't see them at first because they were all lying in my sister's bed with the covers up over their heads. Then a voice said, "Here's our game. You lift the covers from our feet up, and just by looking at our pussies, try to guess who's who. If you guess right, you'll get a reward."

I was in heaven! My cock had deflated a little but it stood straight up at attention when I heard their invitation. I stepped to the foot of the bed and slowly turned back the sheet. There was indeed three sets of legs. You know, one might think you really notice girl's legs and that it's easy to tell one from the other, but I was completely in the dark. As I moved the covers back, I also stopped to stroke their legs. One girl was particularly ticklish. As my hand moved up her legs, she twisted and struggled a little. My heart was racing in anticipation. Donna had black hair, so I expected to be able to tell her pussy right away. But Terri was also a brunette who might also have black pubic hair. My sister was blondish, and I knew she had brown hair between her legs. I turned the sheets farther back.

I ran my hand slowly up each girl's legs and let my fingers trace the lips of each pussy. There was a brown-haired tuft and I presumed that it belonged to my sister. One pussy was covered by a narrow line of jet black hair: it was straight and short. I guessed that was Donna. But then, to my surprise, the third pussy had no hair at all. Whoever it was had shaved herself smooth as a baby. Was it Terri?

I reached up and pulled down the covers to check out who was who. "Not fair," protested Donna. As it turned out, she was the one who had shaved. "Great game," I said, "But I've already decided what I want to do." And with that, I grabbed Terri's legs, spread them wide, then leaned down and let my tongue into her pussy then found her clit. I passed over it a few times and circled around it. As she started to jerk and move under me, I sucked her clit up into my mouth and nibbled on it with my teeth. She nearly exploded, bucking and tossing around on the bed. Lynn and Donna watched wide-eyed until Terri calmed down.

I reached over and grabbed Donna. She was next and she knew it. Her breathing became faster as I fondled her small breasts. While I was working on her Terri stroked my penis.

We then heard a car door slam. Lynn ran to the window and saw our parents coming up the drive. We quickly grabbed our clothes and set a world record for getting dressed. Dad asked me how the lawnmowing had been, and Lynn helped Mum put away the groceries. Terri and Donna excused themselves. I excused myself and went to my room where I undressed, lay on my back, and pumped my penis up and down slowly. In about five minutes I was able to let off a skyrocket of come that shot four feet into the air. — *Name and address withheld.*

Top of the class

This year I worked as a high school teacher at a large city school. Being a good teacher was important to me so I

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took my job very seriously, and like most teachers, during the first half of the year, I was very strict with my students. I got along very well with the majority of the students, and things went smoothly until third term.

I became very close to about 30 students, one in particular — Sue — who was then 18. She had curly, blonde hair and an outstanding body. She was fairly tall with neat, pert breasts. When her nipples stuck straight up, I got aroused just by looking at them.

Sue was a very good student who quickly rose to the top of her class. She received several awards during her last year. One evening when a few students were getting ready for a prize-giving ceremony, Sue asked me to help her pin a medal she had earned on her jacket. I quickly jumped to attention, and with my hand moving ever so gently and slowly, I brushed her beautiful breasts. Sue blushed but did not say a word.

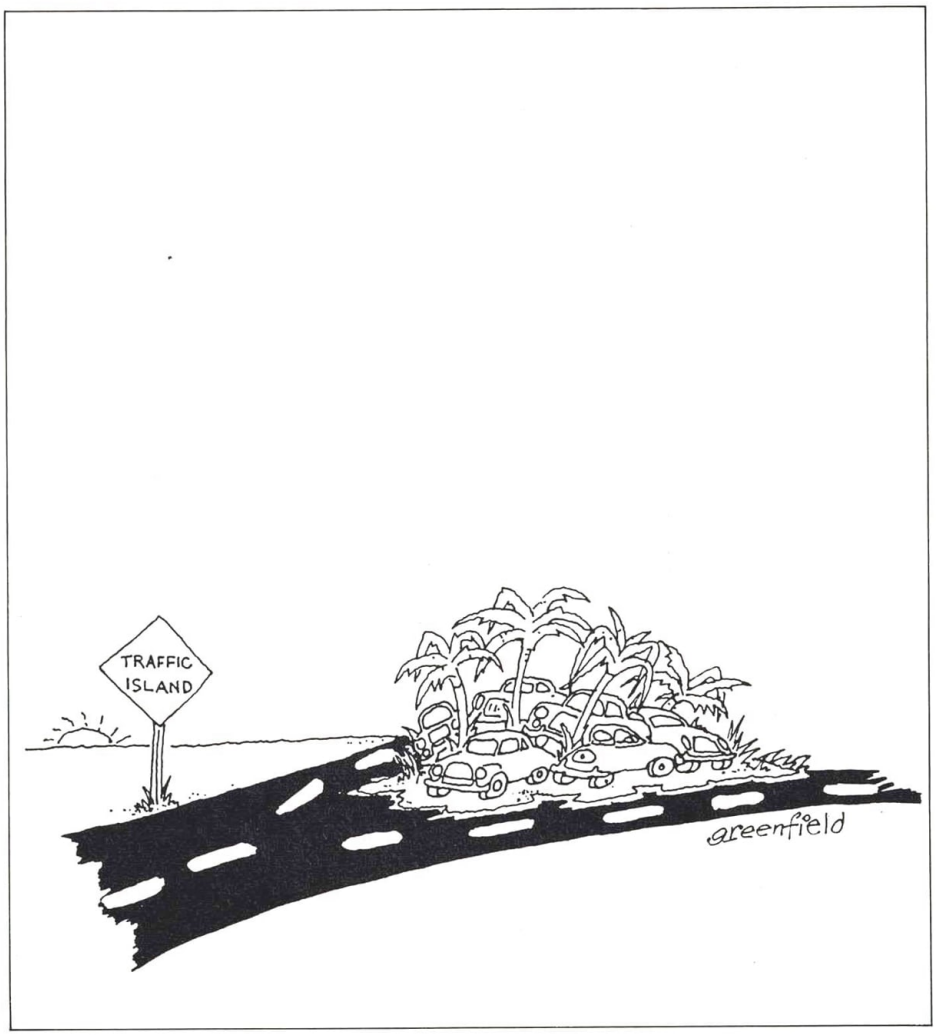
A week later our school planned a long trip for the students. There were two buses and Sue couldn't ride with me on the way down but during our trip, she asked if she could sit with me on the way back. I, of course, said sure. We left early in the evening for our five-hour return trip. After sunset, Sue told me that she was getting cold so I covered us with my jacket. Since we were in the front seat of the bus and in plain view of all the other students and teachers, I had to be very careful. My hand rested on Sue's knee. She reached down and held my hand.

It was getting quite dark so I told the students on the bus that it was time to get some sleep and turn out all the lights. Underneath my jacket Sue rubbed my hand as she leaned against my shoulder. I pretended to be asleep.

After rubbing her arms and legs, I slowly started to unbutton her blouse and unfasten her bra. She had the softest tits and hardest nipples I have ever felt. Moving downward, I rubbed the crotch area of her shorts. Slowly, my hand went inside. Her panties were soaked. I couldn't finish anything that night but I promised myself that I wouldn't let any opportunity to make love to her pass by.

After the trip Sue and I talked quite frequently. Two weeks before school was finished, Sue invited me to go jogging with her. I met her about 10 am, and we jogged for a few kilometres until we both were very sweaty. After watching and wanting her all year I couldn't deny my fantasy any longer. I asked her if she wanted to shower at my place. She said yes. As soon as we were inside, we started French kissing. Sue loves to be kissed on her neck and all over her body. She was wearing a white cotton blouse and very tight navy shorts. I undressed her very slowly. When I lowered her panties, I found a very beautiful, light blonde bush. I kissed and sucked her tits for an eternity and then worked down her very slender body to her wet pussy. I kissed her pussy until she was highly aroused and then licked and sucked her clitoris for about 15 minutes until neither of us could stand it anymore. She asked me to be gentle as I entered her with my cock. She was very, very tight. I hadn't experienced anything like this since I was in teachers' college. I worked my cock in and out of her at an agonisingly slow pace. Slowly, I increased my speed until my balls were beating her smooth, nicely rounded arse. I quickly shot my best wad in years. We then started all over again and she came several times.

I have seen Sue many times since then and every time is as great as the first. — *C.B., Manly, NSW*



Watchful boyfriend

My boyfriend, Steve, has wanted to watch me get screwed by someone else for the longest time. I have to admit I found the idea appealing. Well, it finally happened last Saturday.

A friend of his, Tim, came over unexpectedly in the evening. I had never met Tim, but I had heard a lot about him from Steve. We sat around talking and getting pissed. Suddenly, Steve decided he wanted to show his friend a picture of me nude. When Tim saw the snapshot, he went wild, a bulge forming almost immediately in his tight jeans. Smiling, Steve asked Tim if he wanted to see the real thing.

Without waiting for Tim to respond, Steve took off my shirt to reveal my firm, nicely shaped tits. Then he pulled down my shorts and bared my pussy. By this time I was so wet with excitement I could hardly stand up. I couldn't believe this was happening to me. Steve asked Tim if he'd like to do more than just look, and Tim, not surprisingly, was quick to answer yes. Both guys stripped naked.

Tim settled himself on the couch, and I sat in his lap. With my boyfriend a few feet away and looking on, Tim squeezed my tits while kissing me passionately. His tongue in my mouth and the feel of his swollen cock pushing up against my behind turned me on even more. I was thrilled when Steve suggested that Tim and I go the bedroom and finish what we'd started.

Once in the bedroom I stretched out on the bed, and Tim slipped quickly between my splayed knees. "Taste me," I said excitedly. "Taste me." Tim was very good at eating pussy and obviously enjoyed doing a girl down there. My eyes went from Tim's bobbing, weaving head to Steve, who was stroking his huge erection.

After Tim had given me an orgasm with his tongue, I went down on him. The fact that my boyfriend was watching inspired me, and I really went all-out. I gave Tim the

sloppiest, sluttiest blowjob imaginable, taking all of his pulsating rod down my throat. Then we got into a 69 position and ate each other at the same time. I really took off, climaxing like crazy.

I swivelled around and mounted Tim as Steve moved closer to the bed for a better view. Steve continued pumping his cock as I bounced up and down on Tim's fleshy pole. Having my boyfriend watching made me so excited that I came three times before Tim rolled me over on my back and gave me the hardest, fastest screwing I'd ever had in my life. He pounded me ruthlessly until we both came like gangbusters.

We rested for a few minutes, enjoying the closeness of our bodies as we came back to earth. Then Tim dressed and left. As soon as he was gone, Steve jumped on me and we screwed our brains out. It was spectacular!

The next time Tim drops in, I'm going to try for a real threesome. Just thinking about it makes me wet! — *Name and address withheld*

Where the girls are

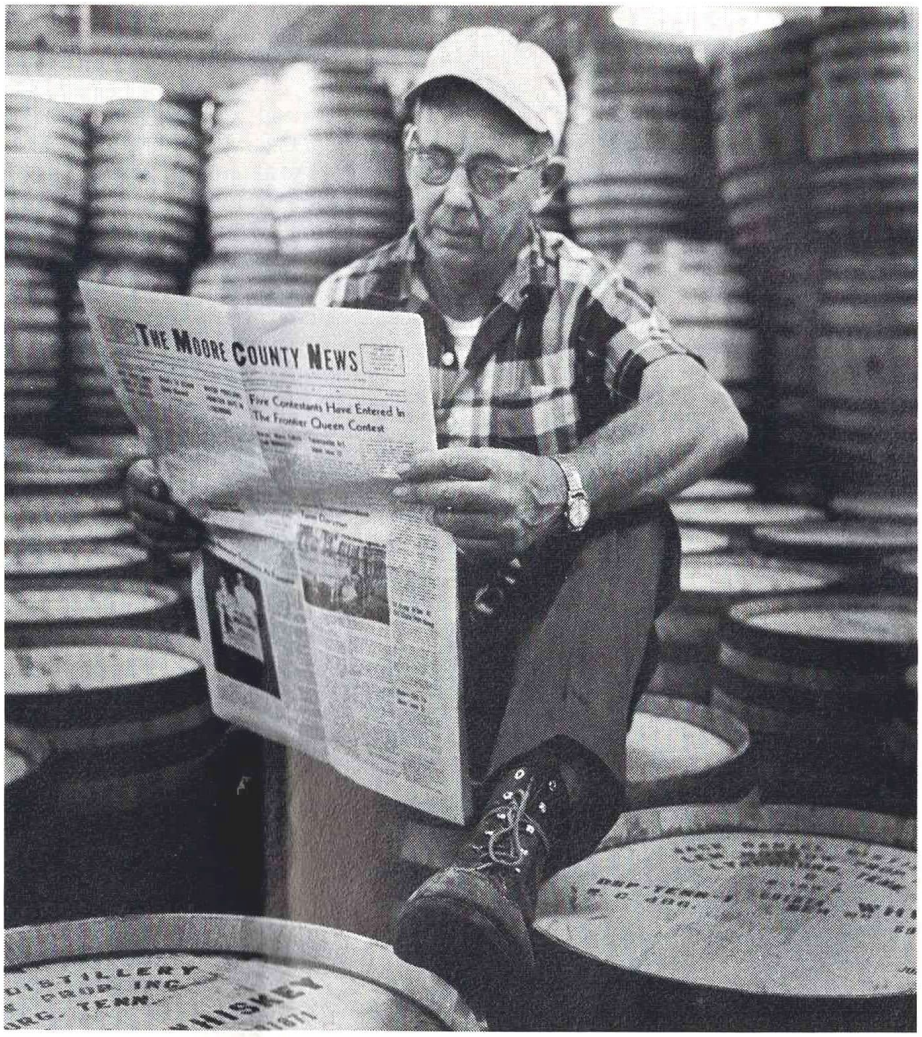
I am a 27-year-old single female who lives alone and works as a legal secretary for a large city firm. I would like to tell you that I enjoy your pictorials and look forward to buying your magazine every month. I suppose it is a little unusual for a girl to enjoy looking at erotic images of other girls but that is why I decided to write in. I wanted to tell someone of my desires.

Don't get me wrong, I enjoy being with men very much but when I'm alone your magazine serves me very well. Although I may sound gay I have had only one encounter with another woman. It happened two years ago while I was at the beach one weekend.

It was early November, and the beaches were surprisingly empty. One morning at about nine o'clock I left my oceanside motel room carrying a towel, a book, and a radio with the sole intention of enjoying a day alone on the beach. When I found a suitable spot in a secluded area I spread my blanket out on the sand.

Lying face down on my blanket, I unhooked my bikini top and quickly buried my head in my book. After about 30 minutes I noticed a young girl, around 22 or 23, walking toward me. She was fair-skinned and very attractive, and her one-piece bathing suit showed off her nice figure. She said hello and asked if she could sit and rest for a while since she'd been walking for hours. I welcomed her to sit down and relax. It wasn't long before we got into an intimate conversation. I felt very warm and close to this woman. It seemed as if we had been friends for years.

Suddenly I noticed that her skin was turning pink, so I offered to spread some coconut oil on her shoulders. She said that would be fine, turned over, and laid face down on my blanket. Immediately she



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Occasionally, you see a piece on Jack Daniel's Distillery. Like when Jack Bateman broke his arm rolling barrels to the warehouse. Or when Frank Bobo (our head distiller) had his grandson born. But normally we don't make the paper much. You see, we've been charcoal mellowing whiskey here at Jack Daniel's since 1866. And according to the editor, there's no news in that anymore.

JWT563.P263 AB3270/84

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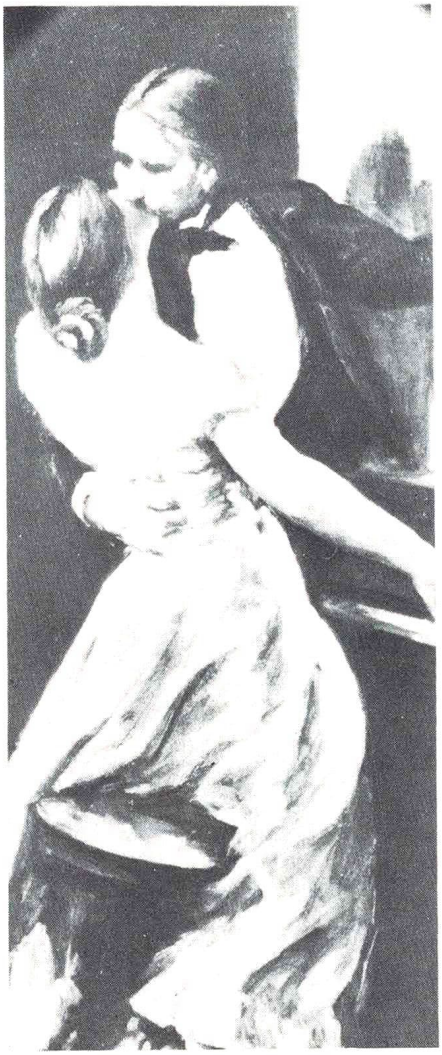
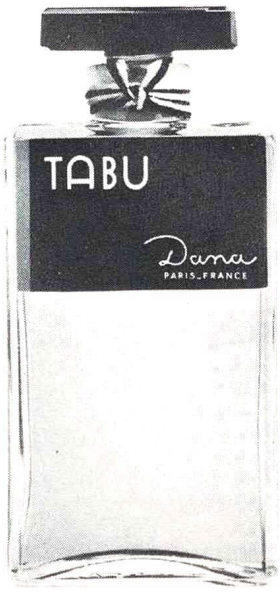


Tabu . . . an embrace that lives forever in a fragrance.



The Forbidden Fragrance

FORUM

pulled the straps down off her shoulders, and I started to work the lotion into her smooth skin, I could feel her muscles relax as I gently massaged her. I don't think either one of us were thinking about anything sexual at this point, but I started to breathe a little faster as my adrenalin began to flow.

She wanted to pull her suit down a little to expose more of her back, so I pulled the straps down for her. Now my hands were free to roam the small of her lovely back. But what I really wanted to do was to touch her beautiful buttocks. It was then that I decided to work my way up from her ankles. Down I went, starting first at her feet, then slowly working up toward her knees. I kneaded and massaged her lower legs, and it seemed as if we both enjoyed it tremendously.

Next I moved up to her thighs, and with great care managed to spread her legs slightly in order to get my hands between them. Her white swimsuit was pulled tight through the crotch, but I had yet to see any of her pubic hairs. I was now a few centimetres from her bum, yet undecided as to how to proceed. I was so hot I shook. My mouth was so dry that I dared not speak for fear of disrupting the moment at any cost.

Finally she let out a sigh and parted her legs. I clearly could see where her suit creased between her lovely legs. I was ready to go for broke. Slowly I worked one leg with both hands. I applied the oil lightly to her upper thighs. Then I reached across her sexy body and began to work on both of her legs at the same time. It was time for me to touch her buttocks. I pressed my oily hands forward, over her cheeks and bathing suit. She didn't say a word, but much to my enjoyment, she spread her legs even further. I then reached up under the elastic band of her suit and slid one hand over her cheeks. I slid one finger into her open crack, and almost came at that point.

I was feeling very brave now so I moved one hand under her suit toward her crotch. I felt for her pubic hair and found a very excited pussy. Her hips began to move, and I realised that I was fulfilling the fantasy of fingering a lovely young girl to orgasm. She started to move her hips up and down, faster and faster. I pulled my hand out quickly to taste her wetness but quickly put it back in. My other hand went into my own bikini bottoms to tweak my own clit. I switched hands several times so that we could exchange our juices. She was humping hard now and I could tell she was about to come. She bucked and moaned, then suddenly lay quiet.

I was so pleased and happy and horny that all I could do was roll over on my back, pull my bikini down to my knees, and masturbate. We both lay there for 30 minutes or so until she looked up and said she had to get back to her husband. She kissed me on the mouth and we caressed for several minutes. After hooking her bikini straps, she ran off down the beach.

I laid on the beach for another hour hoping she would return, but she never did. I never saw her again. — *Name and address withheld*

Wolf in sheep's clothing

I am a married male and have what I consider to be a healthy sex life. Every now and then, my wife and I enjoy showering each other with gifts of intimate clothing and sex toys.

She is a full-figured woman, so purchasing sexy lingerie for her is rather easy. Women are fortunate to be able to wear such beautiful apparel. I think men got the short end of the stick in this department. Why shouldn't we be able to don the lacy garters, stockings and corsets that feel so good against the skin?

For the last year I've been experimenting with my wife's lingerie and have found it to be quite stimulating. I have been masturbating for years and believe it to be extremely satisfying and healthy. Normally, I grab one of my favorite *Penthouse* mags and "beat the bishop" on a regular basis. But now I have found a new thrill to heighten my enjoyment.

First I get into my wife's undies drawer and find something I'm sure to fit into. My favorites are her nylons, garters, and lacy bras and panties. Once in a while I'll slip into a corset, which is usually a tight fit, but that makes it all the better.

Once I am all decked out, I strut around the house and touch myself all over. The feel of the lacy material and sheer stockings against my flesh sends my mind into a tizzy, and my dick soars up to a 90-degree angle. Sometimes, to prolong my fun, I will clean up the house clad in my luscious borrowed apparel, pretending to be a hungry housewife wishing my husband would come home soon to plug up all of my holes. Oh, women have it so good.

After I have fulfilled myself with erotic pleasures, I get down to the serious business at hand.

By the way, the girls in your magazine are a big help and they'll all be happy to know that I look as good as they do in my lingerie. — *J.D., Temora, NSW*

The friendly ghost

I was undecided as to whether to send my story to Forum or Ripley's Believe It Or Not. I figured Ripley's wouldn't believe it, so as you can see, I've decided to send it to you.

Let me start by saying that I have always been skeptical about the existence of things I haven't seen or touched. I am talking about Yowies, Big Foot, aliens from outer space, ghosts, ESP, and all supernatural things that are untouchable or invisible to the naked eye. I felt this way until

Where would we be without Red?

~ MASIUS WAL10092 AB3046/84

last month when I had the most wonderful and bizarre experience.

I have lived in a crowded city all of my life. I wanted some room to move around in, so I began to look for an alternate living space. While driving through the country I saw a nice little two-storey house for sale. It was pretty rundown, but I knew that it was just what I needed — a place in the country. It offered me the room to stretch out in and it was definitely secluded. I called the agent listed on the "For Sale" sign and bought it that same day.

It had been a week since I moved into the house, and I was getting the place in order. Several times during the week I felt as though someone was watching me. I was forever turning around to see if someone was in the same room with me.

Finally, on my seventh night in the house, I met the presence I had been feeling. I was lying in bed reading when the lamp suddenly became dim, so dim that it barely illuminated the room. Thinking that the filament in the bulb might be acting up, I rolled over on to my side toward the lamp and flicked the bulb with my finger. After tapping it several times, I rolled back over on to my back and suddenly began to feel that strange, uncomfortable sense of being watched again. As I scanned the room my eyes fixed on what I thought was some type of vapor. To my astonishment the vapor started to take shape. My heart started racing so fast I thought it was going to come right out of my chest. I was scared to death, but I couldn't move. I was totally paralysed. I just lay there watching the vapor transform into a young woman.

As I stared in disbelief I heard a soft, but chilling voice call my name. I tried to answer, but every time I opened my mouth to talk, I couldn't make a sound. Again the voice called out, "John, please relax and don't be afraid. I will not harm you. As a matter of fact, I need your help." I was mesmerised, but slowly I tried to control my breathing and heartbeat. After a moment I was able to relax somewhat and talk. I asked, "What are you? Who are you? How can I possibly help you?" She told me her name was Bess. She said that she and her fiance had bought this house together right after he was conscripted for WWII. Before he was shipped overseas, they were married right here, in this house. But that's all they had time for. He had to be at the train station to leave in a matter of two hours, and there wasn't time to consummate the marriage. Three months after her husband had left Bess received a telegram from the government. Her husband had been killed. Bess said she almost went crazy, but eventually she pulled herself together. Shortly after the news of her husband's death, Bess caught pneumonia and died. With her last breath she murmured that she wished that she could have received her husband's physical love before she died. She said that because of her strong yearnings to have sex, her spirit remained in the house, waiting for her husband to return. As much as she wanted to go to the hereafter, she was trapped by an unfulfilled craving.

After Bess related her story to me I asked her, "Well, how can I possibly help you?" She said, "I have watched you this past week. You look a lot like my husband and you seem to be a gentle man. I want to make love to you."

I was dumbfounded; I didn't know what to say. "Please," said Bess, "just lie back and relax and surrender your body to me." I was still in shock but I consented. She moved toward me in a floating gesture then moved over me as if she were laying on me. What a strange sensation this was! I knew she was on top of me because I could see her, but there was no feeling of weight pressing down on me. There was just this stange feeling. It felt as if a very warm, steady breeze was blowing gently over my entire body. I began to relax.

I felt a very pleasant sensation on my face and neck. It electrified my entire body. I asked her what she was doing and she said, "I am kissing you, my dearest." Bess moved slowly down my body, kissing me, causing the most wonderful sensations I have ever experienced. By the time she got to my balls and cock the anticipation alone was almost enough to make me come. Somehow I held back, aided by some power other than myself. I could feel the electrified kisses all over my cock and balls. Then my cock received the most sensuous treat ever. Starting at its tip, Bess moved up and down it. It was the most heavenly feeling. How I ever kept from coming is beyond me. The sensation would hover over the tip of my cock and then plumb back down again. There was no doubt about it. I was getting head from a ghost.

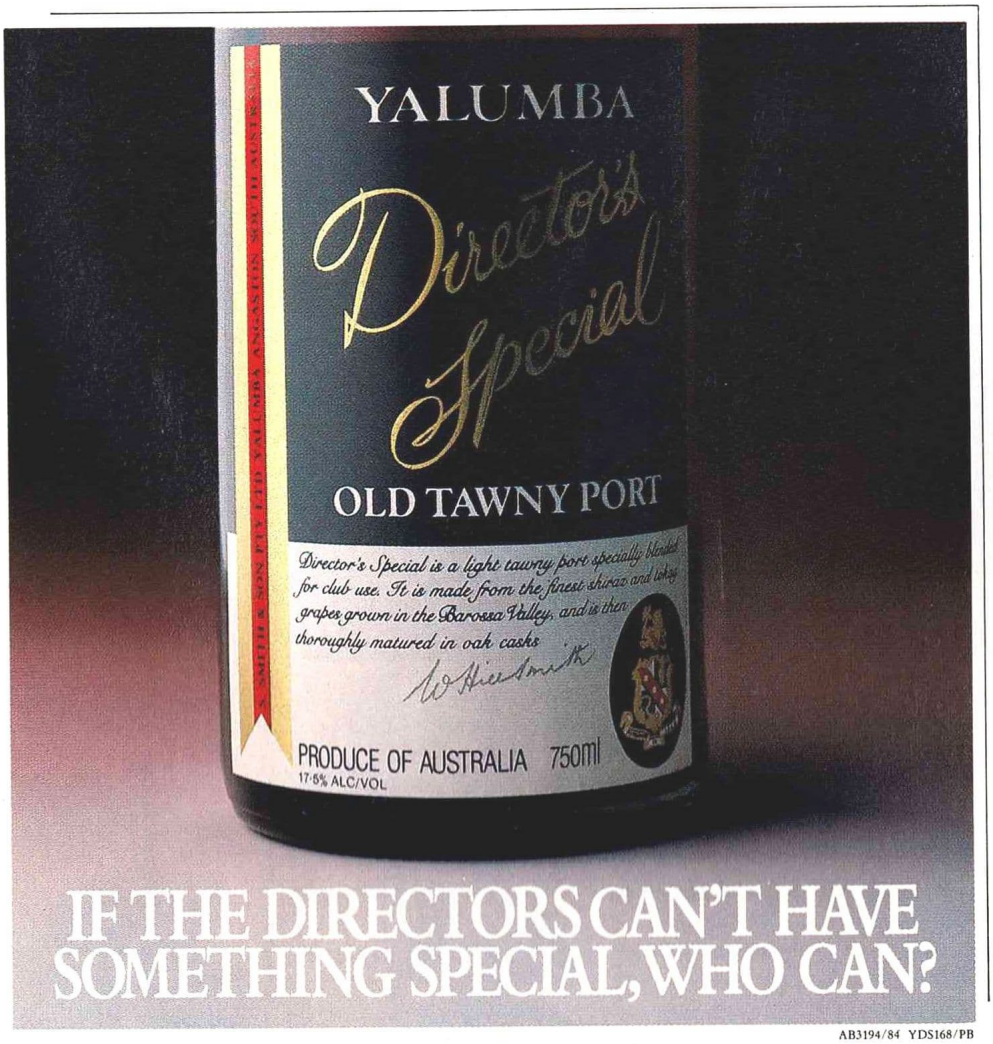
Later, Bess sat on my thighs and I could feel her slide my cock into her. What a sensation! Her warm presence was now resting on my thighs and hips. A warm breeze surrounded my cock and an electrical charge tingled my balls. I almost passed out from pure pleasure.

Then Bess started rocking on my cock, sliding it in and out of her. I just couldn't hold back any longer. Just as I started to come she said, "Thank you," and I passed out. When I came to, there was a sweet smelling liquid all over me. I though surely it was a dream, but there next to me was a picture of Bess in her wedding gown, and on the back were the words: "Even though we are apart, we shall always be together." — *Name and address withheld*

He loves to eat

I am a 19-year-old male who was short-changed in the penis department. When fully erect, my cock measures a mere 11

Continued on page 21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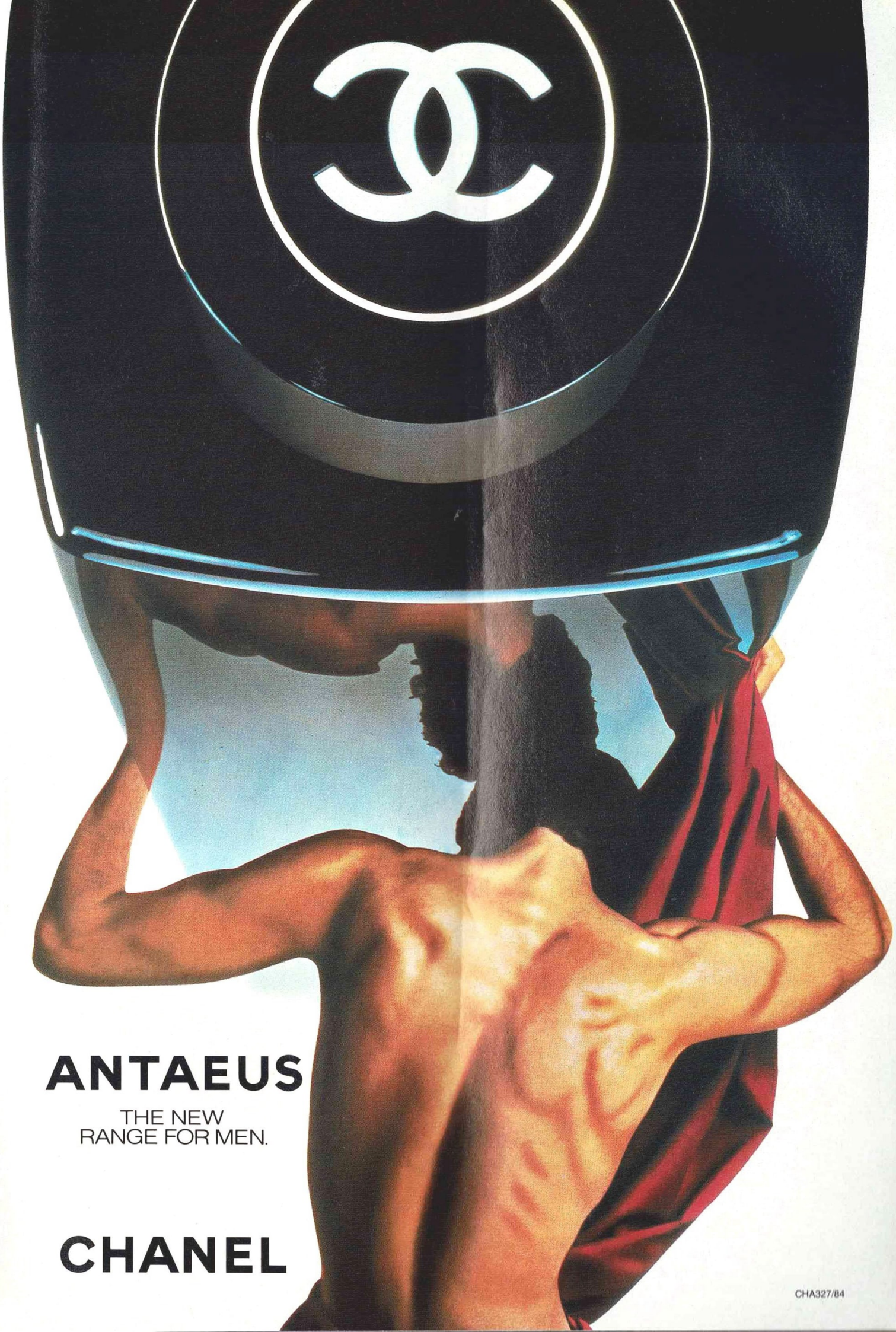
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SWAT 0007

FORUM

Continued from page 16

centimetres. But all my sexual encounters have been satisfying, because I have mastered the art of eating pussy. Take it from me, a girl won't worry too much about the size of your love stick if you've got an educated tongue.

I struck it rich last weekend when I attended a party given by one of my friends. I knew quite a few of the girls at the party, and as I gulped booze I got hornier and hornier. It was getting late when one of the girls (I'll call her Julie) asked me for a ride home. I had heard that she was a real good root, so I quickly said I'd be glad to give her a lift.

We walked outside to my van, where we were greeted by two of Julie's friends. Candy and Rosie asked if they could tag along. Naturally I said it was okay. We all piled into my "fuck palace" and took off, me up front in the driver's seat and the three girls in back.

Well, we had gone about a mile down the road when I heard giggling coming from the back of the van. I turned down the radio and looked back. Candy and Rosie were naked and locked in a luscious sixty-nine. Julie had pushed her jeans and panties down to her knees and was jamming her fingers into her dripping love hole. She gave me one hell of a sexy smile and asked if I'd like to taste her sex cream. Before I could answer, she withdrew her fingers from her pussy and, moving toward me, rubbed them over my moustache. She smelled and tasted delicious. By this time my cock was ready to bust through my jeans.

I quickly found a place to park and tore off my clothes. Joining the girls in the back of the van, I buried my face in the first pussy I saw, which happened to be Candy's. She moaned with joy as I started licking her slit and tonguing her clit. Julie wiggled underneath me and wrapped her wet, velvety lips around my swollen dick. Then Rosie went to work munching on Julie's tasty twat.

It wasn't long before I shot a load of creamy come right down Julie's pretty throat. She got so excited she almost bit my dick off as she tried to gulp down my load. In fact, when I finally pulled my rod from her greedy mouth, it looked as if it had been chewed raw. I asked the girls if they wanted to have a suck-off, and they all loved the idea. We spent the next two hours licking and sucking one another and coming all over the place.

Before driving the girls home, I got them to agree to bring the "munchies" to the next party we all attended. I promised to supply my bed on wheels. — *Name and address withheld.*

Family ties

My sister-in-law, Jean, is not only about the same age as my wife, she also has many other similarities, including good looks. So, of course, it's only natural for me to be attracted to the same things that attracted me to my wife, especially sexually.

Jean called to say she was coming over to watch TV, so I decided to test the waters and see if she had the same desires I had. I put on a pair of Stubbies, and purposely didn't wear any underpants, and anxiously waited for her to arrive.

My wife was home at the time, but I don't think she noticed my attire. Sitting on the couch, I played with my cock until it was straining at the seams of my shorts. As I did this, I purposely exposed the tip of my cock. I then pretended to read a magazine. When she entered the room, Jean sat in a chair directly across from me. My wife sat in a chair facing a different direction and couldn't see what I was doing. Jean's eyes immediately focused on my crotch. I watched in delight as she stared directly at my exposed cock. She remained transfixed for quite a while and then a smile appeared on her face.

That was all the prompting I needed. That evening after Jean had left and my wife had gone shopping, I called Jean and asked her if she had enjoyed the show. To my surprise she said that she had been so excited that she masturbated right in our bathroom during a commercial!

Jean said that she couldn't come over again that night because she was afraid her sister would find out about us and that she also didn't want to be unfaithful to her husband. She did suggest, however, that from then on we both tease each other and then fantasise about the experience while masturbating.

The next time Jean stopped by *she* wore shorts and no underpants. She waited until my wife left the room and then pulled back the pant leg, exposing her chubby, pouting pussy. Then she looked right at me and put her finger on her clit and played with herself. I couldn't contain myself. I immediately ran into the bathroom and jacked off.

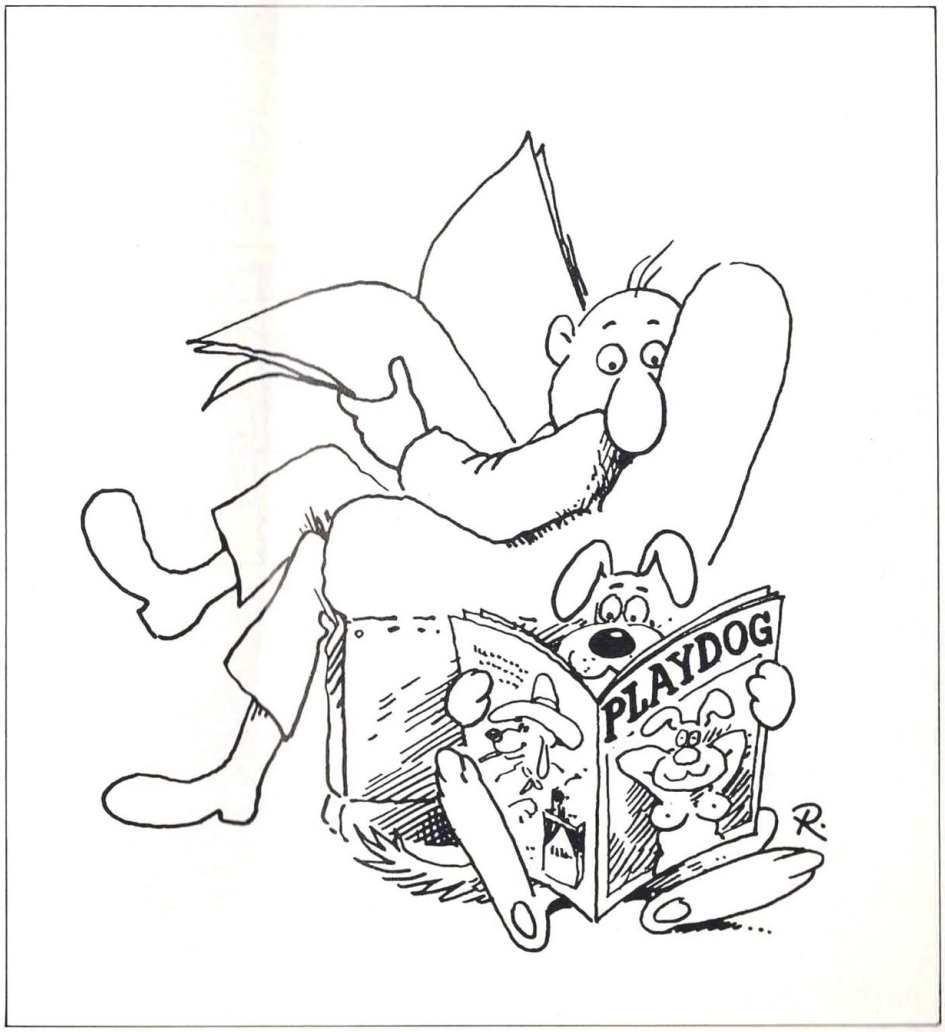
Now, every time Jean comes over, she leaves the door to the bathroom ajar so that I can watch her as she masturbates.

If this weren't enough, one time she went to the beach with my wife and me, and while we were swimming, she slipped off her bikini bottoms and circled me under the water.

The situation has got out of hand and I don't know how much longer I can stand just looking at her. But for now I'm enjoying it immensely, and this is all I can expect out of respect for both of our spouses. — *T.R., Airport West, Vic*

Inscrootable

I'm a 34-year-old businesswoman and a practitioner of Chinese Wu-Shu (martial Arts). My specialty is Chinese boxing —



FORUM

Northern Shaolin style. It's very difficult for a non-Chinese to be accepted as a pupil by some of the better instructors who are really into teaching not into making money. And it's especially difficult for non-Chinese women.

Since I have an interest in Oriental history, I decided to take up the art of Chinese kung fu, both for its beautiful physical forms and also as a means of self-defence. I had enquired about one particular studio, but was informed that the instructor didn't accept non-Chinese students. But I had made up my mind to get accepted and went to the studio to talk my way into the class.

The instructor was not in, but one of his assistants invited me into his office and told me to wait. As I looked around his cluttered office, I saw a stack of men's magazines (mostly *Penthouse)* on the floor in one corner of the room. As it turned out, the instructor was a handsome young guy from Hong Kong, about 30 years old.

He was very aloof at first, and after a few minutes he told me that he was very busy and I should return around seven o'clock to discuss the matter further. I had no choice but to comply and returned promptly at seven.

He was waiting for me, and this time he was very friendly. Everyone had left and he had locked the door. He invited me upstairs to his office and we exchanged small talk. Then he took me out to the middle of the studio and told me to squat into a horse stance. He told me to close my eyes and remain very until I was told otherwise. I knew that he was checking me out. Incidentally, I'm tall, 68 kilos (a big girl), with shoulder-length brown hair and green eyes. I have medium-sized tits, but they are shapely with nice large nipples.

After a good 10 minutes, I was aching. Finally, he told me to relax. Next, he made me do some basic exercises and moves in order to check out my co-ordination. He seemed satisfied with my performance. As I went through the routines he would make a comment here and there and occasionally move in close to touch my outer thigh or bicep. He seemed to be quite happy with my form and fitness. He asked me to sit down as he demonstrated various forms, and I was truly awed at his speed and agility.

Finally, we went back to his office. He told me that he didn't accept women, especially Caucasians, since they lacked sincerity and the will to learn. But he told me that he would think about accepting me and would let me know in a week.

I had worked up a sweat and asked if I could use the shower. He said yes and showed me to the showers, and then he departed. I stripped and showered, but when I stepped out of the shower recess, I noticed that there were no towels. I didn't know it then, but students were required to bring their own. I was out of luck, or so I thought.

I called out to the instructor and told him that I needed a towel. When he came into the room, I stepped out stark naked and proceeded to dry myself right in front of him.

His eyes just about popped out of his head! Giving him a sly smile, I said, "What's the matter? Haven't you seen a naked Caucasian girl before?"

"No, only in magazines," he replied. I could see that he obviously had an erection straining at the white fabric of his baggy trousers.

I felt giddy inside, but knew I was making a lasting impression and took my time drying off. Then I told him that my body ached all over. He quickly offered to massage me with some Tiger Balm ointment.

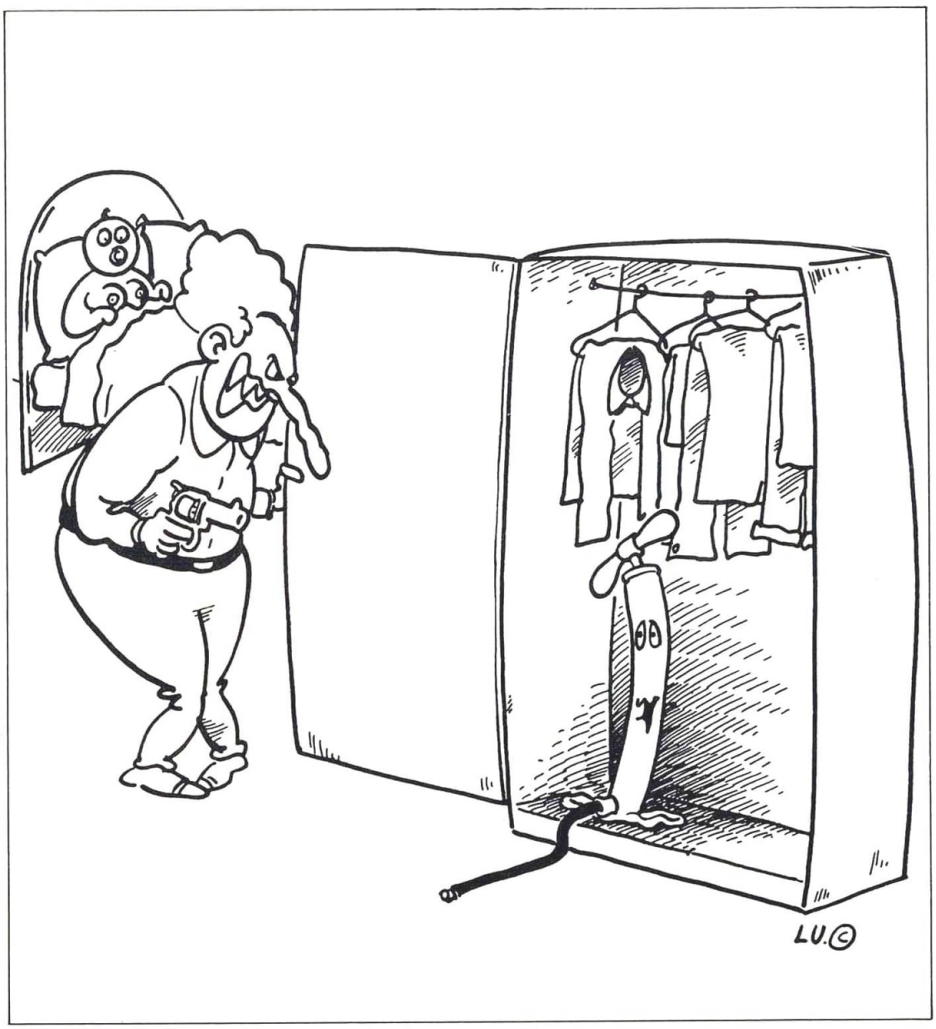
As I lay down on the couch, I realised that he couldn't hold back for long! As he fondled my tits, I reached down and began to stroke his cock through his pants. He quickly took them off and I started to jerk him off. Without a word, he buried his head between my legs and began to lap at my pussy! "Caucasian girls have too much hair on their pussy," he said. "Chinese girls don't have that much hair!" He munched away for a good 10 minutes until he brought me to a powerful orgasm!

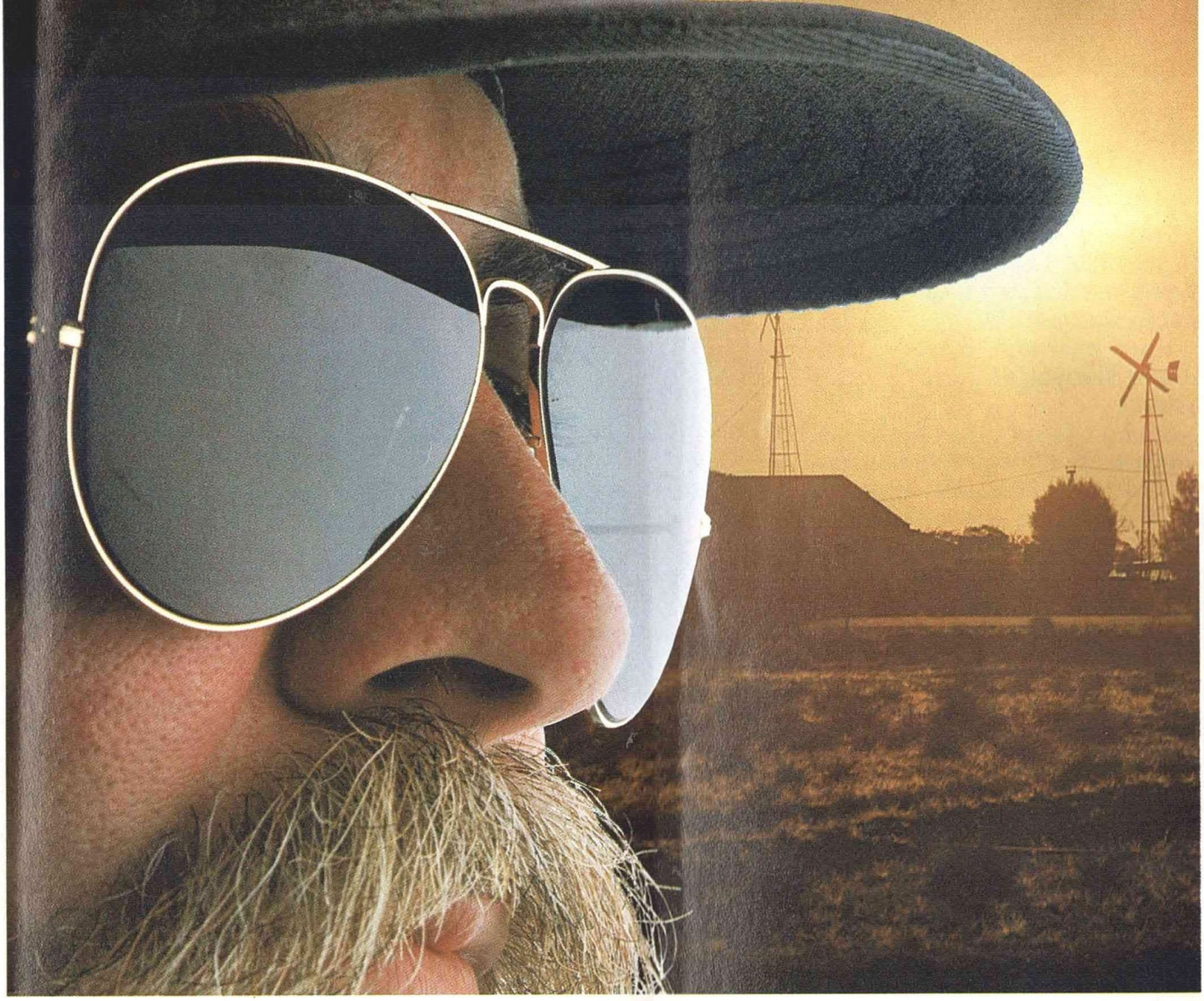
I was now ready for him to enter me. I was pretty well lubed and he entered my pussy with ease. He then proceeded to bang away on my box. During this time, I achieved another orgasm. Finally, nearing my third climax, I reached down and pulled out his cock and rubbed it fast till he exploded, sending a geyser of come right over my breasts into my face! I couldn't believe the sheer force and volume of his ejaculation! The last time I experienced anything like this was back in school when I jerked off a classmate who had a wild crush on me.

The instructor stayed hard and he entered me again. He was really sweating as he worked vigorously to get his rocks off. He finally had another orgasm. By this time we were both wasted, and we lay in each other's arms for a few minutes. Then we got up and showered off.

He was so happy that he couldn't contain his joy! He had always dreamed of screwing a Caucasian girl, and I was very happy to let his fantasy come true. I hadn't been screwed like that in ages.

He agreed to take me on as his pupil. During regular class sessions, he gives me no special treatment and works me as hard as everyone else. But once a week, I stay after school for private lessons. When that's over, I give him "private lessons"! We are both learning a great deal from each other and find this arrangement very satisfactory. — *Name and address withheld*





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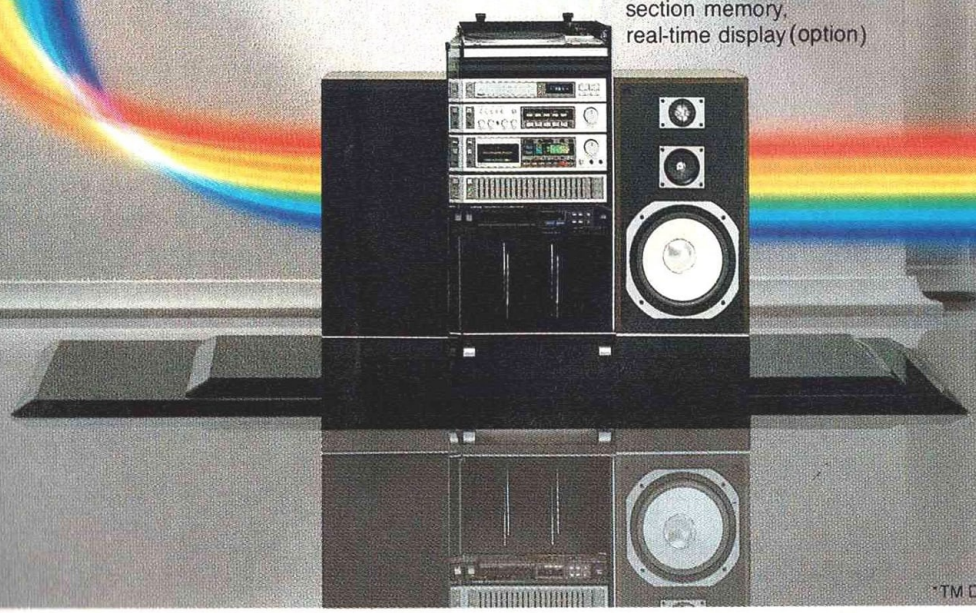

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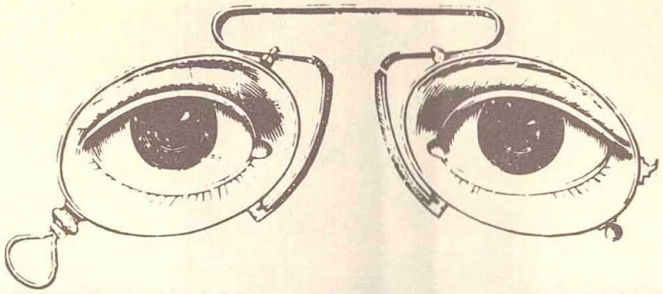


VIEW FROM THE TOP

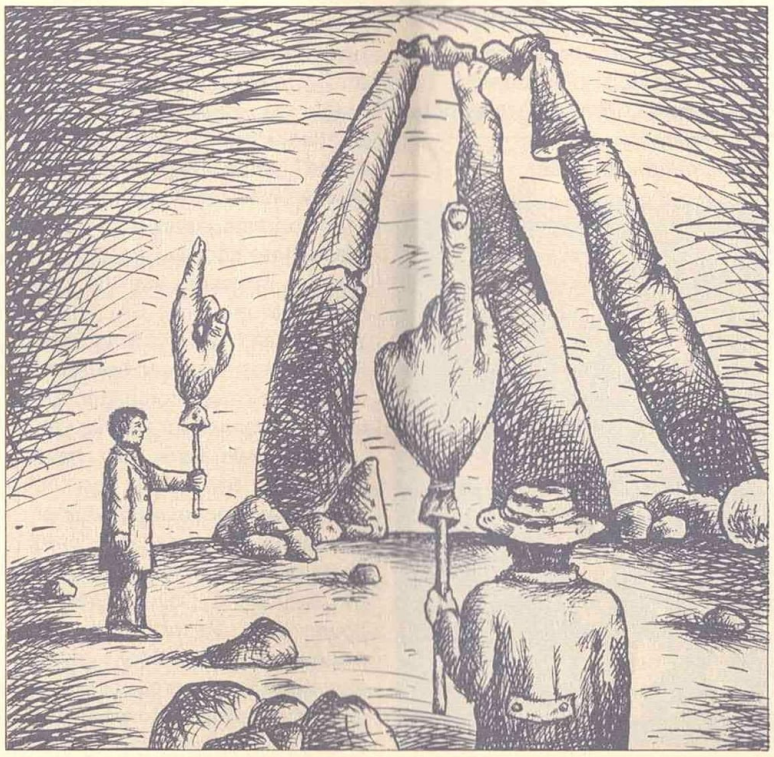
HISTORY IN THE FAKING

BY GREG HUNTER

The current glut of TV mini-series is no mere aberration on the Australian film horizon. Recent changes to the laws governing tax concessions for film investors and the local content requirements for Australian TV networks have already combined to produce the virtual demise of the Aussie feature film. Into the vacuum has stepped the historical mini-series, and we're about to be swamped with them. *The Last Bastion, Cowra, Flying Doctors, A Thousand Skies, The Anzacs* and *Atlantis Flight 1925* are just a few of the television "events" we will witness in the coming months. With any luck they will not all be born the bastard offspring of an unholy union between "dramatic licence" and the God of Ratings, as was the recent effort, *Bodyline*; but it seems an opportune time to try and set out exactly what is and what is not legitimate when it comes to presenting history in TV-sized chunks.

Now, I'll take it as given that from every viewpoint other than financial, *Bodyline* was a waste of celluloid. Legions of sportswriters, cricket buffs and surviving players rushed to publicly pronounce the series a wrong 'un from the opening scene to stumps. But let's face the sordid truth: from the moment *Bodyline* was conceived, nothing short of a bomb blast on the set was going to stop it from shutting down all opposition. Program execs on the competing networks didn't even bother throwing up a token resistance. They knew that the Kennedy-Miller production outfit would have a captive audience (many of whom already held passionate views on the subject of bodyline) who would be primed to fever pitch by an avalanche of emotive prepublicity and automatically rivetted to the screen under the carefully contrived illusion that the events portrayed would be historically real. They also knew that the scriptwriters would milk the concept for every ounce of human conflict by manipulating the facts (often to the point of absurdity) and would justify these gross distortions by producing their dramatic licences. Under these conditions, a rating somewhere in the 30s would not have been out of the question if *Bodyline* had been written, produced and directed by Donald Duck. As it turned out, the series consistently weighed in with 40s and peaked in Melbourne on the final instalment at 56 — the second-highest rating in the history of Australian television, surpassed only by another (albeit far superior) historical mini-series, *The Dismissal.*

All of which means that I'm about to start pissing into the wind, but the fact is that in contrast to the *Bodyline* beat-up, there are certain legitimate ways to present history as entertainment. First, the documentary, which purports to be factual and *is* factual. Then there's the period drama, where the central characters are not major historical figures so it doesn't matter whether the story is "true" or not. But in the typical historical mini-series, as seen on TV, you *are* dealing with the major characters and events of some important period and you're purporting to present the facts in dramatised form. In this case, it is just not on to start manipulating the emotions of the viewer by altering the course of history whenever it seems expedient. Naturally, nobody can be certain of who said what to whom on every important occasion, so you *can* make sensible speculations based on all available knowledge of the characters — indeed you have to do that. But you cannot, for example, have spectators ritually burning the flag, symbolising the collapse of Empire (as we saw in *Bodyline*), when it never happened. You can't show Harold Larwood grimacing with hatred every time he bowls a nasty one when he never did any such thing. And you can't introduce major characters who are totally fictional just to add a token sex interest. If the story is not fact and not fiction, then what the hell is it? The answer is that it is just plain bullshit, and there ought to be a law against it.



The Last Bastion, currently screening around the nation, is an attempt to do the thing properly. According to co-author Denis Whitburn, the drama is based entirely on insights gained from recently released documents of the period, and there's no significant tampering with the course of history. Let's hope *The Last Bastion* serves as a model for the historical mini-series, and that somebody bothers to watch it.

Illustration by Graham Rendoth

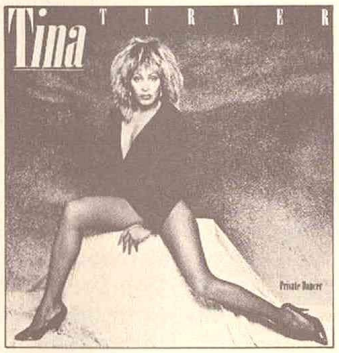
SOUNDS

EMOTIVE ELVIS

One of the more constantly replayable voices in modern pop, **Elvis Costello** taunts us with his latest sympathy grabber *Goodbye Cruel World* (F Beat). This dour English dumpling may appear impassive most of the time on and off stage, but you get the feeling he's an incurable romantic beneath the crust. As usual he has some fine lyric moments invested with enough sarcasm to make them memorable. He may be patronising others' foibles, but he does so with a hint of the first person. Shuffling in a corner, hands in pockets, head bowed, he says things like "I just wanna be loved" and "I wish he could be the man he was before he was me." At least the Attractions, with new keyboard player Maurice Worm, come over and help him get it off his chest with sympathetic backing. They "rock out" on "Sour Milk Cow Blues" and "Deportees" but the best moments arrive on tracks like "Home Truth", "Inch By Inch" and the sequel to his Falklands inspired "Shipbuilding", "Peace In Our Time."

Star of concert stage and studio, **Prince** is back in a fabulously successful cinematic mood. *Purple Rain* (Warner Bros) is music from the movie of the same name but is no mere soundtrack. Elements of his compressed funk and yelps are there but this boy, who has the right to be the subjects of the Buzzcocks' old anthem "Orgasm Addict", has broadened his horizons. Some songs explode with guitar as in the wah-wahed fuzz of "Computer Blue" or the blues rock grunge ending to "Let's Go Crazy." More immediately recognisable Prince is the single "When Doves Cry", although his multi-talented presence homogenises all tracks, avoiding any tendency towards a Rose Tattoo-Kamahl compilation. This is probably the richest musical legacy of Prince's ascent to stardom. It's fine if he still clings to the sartorial vision of a new romantic pimp but if we could just do something about that moustache . . .

From the Prince of Sleaze to the Queen of Raunch: **Tina Turner** is a *Private Dancer* (Inter-



Tina Turner . . . *animal power*

fusion). A veteran and influential performer for more than 20 years, Tina has at times shimmied on thin ice over the cabaret abyss. No thoughts of ageing gracefully have diluted her basic animal power in voice and movement. Her singing lapses sometimes into nasal overkill ("molten soul") but a wise choice of musicians and producers including Dire Straits, Heaven 17 and Rupert Hine have given her some strong material and interesting backing. Little magic is bestowed on the Beatles' "Help" and Bowie's "1984" while "Rock And Roll Widow" is an unnecessary piece of melodrama. Apart from these lapses into showbiz froth there are fine moments like the title track, "What's Love Got To Do With It" and "I Can't Stand The Rain" that should keep her out of the Diana Ross Home (for the terminally banal) for a while yet.

Psychedelic Furs may have moved to New York for the cultural ambience and a year of late nights but vocalist Richard Butler still sounds like he could be manning a Covent Garden flower stall. Recorded in Los Angeles with Billy Idol's main-man Keith Forsey producing and drumming, *Mirror Moves* (CBS) avoids the upfront guitar that Todd Rundgren stamped on to "President Gas." Softer keyboard sounds and occasional brass put the Furs into a mellower mood that builds to hummable moments but alters little in between — often only serving to showcase Butler's vowels.

The TV soundtrack to *Sweet And Sour* (ABC) takes up the mantle of representing contemporary Australian pop, carelessly dropped during the *Starstruck* attempt. It's not exactly bigger than *Ben Hur* or even the Monkees, but is still a believable attempt.

Miles Davis may have been treading water in a pool of his own construction the last few albums, but *Decoy* (CBS) sees him splashing around in fine form. It features some great percussive bass from Darryl "The Munch" Jones.

Lou Reed has been experiencing some *New Sensations* (RCA), like fresh air and domestic bliss, while Siouxsie And The Banshees have dragged their *Hyaena* (Polydor) around half a dozen studios and arrive back with another swirling mass of post-punk psychedelia. The aptly titled *The Late Great Tim Buckley* (WEA) is for those who've forgotten why they remember him.

Eddie Murphy professes to be a *Comedian* (CBS) with some adult gags that are as scintillating as vomit ice cream. Athenian (that's Athens, Georgia) mumblers **REM** arrived not with a bang but a *Murmur.* They have now met their *Reckoning* (IRS) — it's black and round with a small hole in the middle.

From deep in the heart of Texas comes more trad rock blues geetar from **Stevie Ray Vaughn And Double Trouble** on *Couldn't Stand The Weather* (Epic). It includes a plodding version of Jimi Hendrix' "Voodoo Chile." — *Jeremy Cook*

Prince . . . *new romantic pimp with talent*

FILM

HEROES AND VILLAINS

Once Upon A Time In America is not a film to be summed up in a few paragraphs. It would seem also that for director Sergio Leone it was not a film to be summed up in a mere three and a half hours.

The seeds of this sprawling epic about gangland New York over 40 years or so were planted in Leone's mind more than a decade ago. The director (whose previous credits include *A Fistful Of Dollars, For A Few Dollars More* and *Once Upon A Time In The West*) happened on an obscure paperback called *The Hoods,* written by a retired Jewish mobster. The book formed the bones of Leone's plan to make his "fantasy" film about America.

By all accounts *The Hoods* was a simple little collection of fond reminiscences of the author's days running booze, making underworld deals and mowing down rival mobsters. *Once Upon A Time In America* is hardly that — it's a full-blown, complicated and baffling saga that takes more jumps backwards and forwards in time than a series of *Dr Who.*

Basically, very basically, the film follows the relationship between two buddies, Noodles and Max, who meet as children when they're both rolling drunks in a Jewish neighborhood of New York in the early Twenties. With three other scruffy little crims they form a street gang whose crimes move onwards and upwards from pilfering to protection rackets and bootlegging. As their booty grows the boys make a pact to store their profits in a railway locker and entrust the key to a friend. Max and Noodles part company when Noodles is hauled off to prison for stabbing a cop.

Ten years later Noodles is out of the slammer to join Max and the boys in their flourishing bootlegging and protection racket. It's 1933 and business is booming. The stash of greenbacks in the railway locker has swollen to a million bucks and it's growing all the time. Noodles is reunited with Deborah, the girl he had fallen in love with as a child.

Well, Prohibition is ending and the boys have to think of another scene to muscle in on. Just about everyone gets wiped out when Noodles, for noble reasons, tips off the Feds about their last booze run, someone pinches the money from the locker and Noodles hightails into hiding. He's mysteriously called back to New York in 1968 to perform one last "hit" and to solve the mystery of what happened all those years ago.

Leone's casting of Robert De Niro as Noodles is perfect. De Niro gives his usual all to the role and he tackles the screen ageing process in a magnificently convincing manner. James Wood is spot-on as the chilling and twisted Max and Tuesday Weld seems eternally youthful and interesting in the pivotal role of Carol, Max's girlfriend who likes a lot of slap with her tickle. Elizabeth McGovern plays Elizabeth McGovern — vulnerable and beautiful — as Deborah, and poses Leone's make-up artists the impossible task of ageing her 40 years. Mighty character actor Burt Young belches, leers and dribbles his minor role as a hood into one of the most memorable in the film.

The juggernaut proportions this film assumed in production tempted Leone to cut it into two films. Instead, he has edited it ruthlessly down to a mammoth three and a half hours of jagged, often confusing and ultimately unsatisfying product. However, its rich cinematography, its artistic redolence of the Twenties and Thirties and the fine role portrayals of its very talented cast sweep the audience up into its mystery and make up for most of the heavy-handed touches that litter it. *Once Upon A Time In America* is limited by its own baffling complexity. Don't expect a neat package with all loose ends tied, and take a packed lunch.

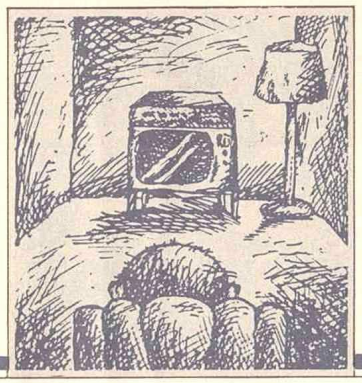
De Niro and Woods in Once Upon A Time In America

Little Liz Taylor went through such a lot to win the Grand National in *National Velvet.* Jockey Bob Champion went through hell to win the same race in 1981. Cancer was diagnosed in the leading British jockey in the late Seventies and he was told that unless he underwent chemotherapy he would die within eight months. He was also told that even if the treatment were successful he would never ride again. The story of how he beat cancer, fell in love, regained his strength and went on to win the most gruelling steeplechase on a horse that had once been seriously injured is recounted in the film **Champions.**

It's sad to say that although *Champions* is a true story, that story is a corny one for audiences who were weaned on such heroic tales — albeit fictitious — and have since come to demand a lot more.

The chief saving grace of this John Irvin directed film is the performance of John Hurt in the central role. The acclaimed actor recreates Bob Champion's fears and reactions to his torturous therapy in a horrifyingly realistic manner. Also, by portraying Champion as a bit of an old, crotchety, chauvinist prick, he mops up quite a few of the sugar-flavored tears the film might otherwise have drowned in. Another plus is the footage of the climactic race showing in frightening close-up the thundering hooves and violent pile-ups of man and horseflesh.

The main factors making this a film to be avoided are its powerfully awful dialogue, which has a tendency to send nervous titters through the audience at supposedly moving moments, and Carl Davis's musical score which is heavy on the romantic heroism, overloud and generally teeth grinding. — *C.J. Mackay*



VIDEO

LATE RUNS

Recently, Barry Cohen, Federal Minister for Home Affairs and Environment, stated that the video industry has emerged as a major threat to cinemas. "That threat is related to the high penetration achieved by video, and is greatly exacerbated by the hasty release pattern characterising much of the video market." Determined to protect the cinema industry, the government is presently considering a range of options available to it. Primary in its thinking is self-regulation.

Three recent video releases give an interesting working example of the problems inherent in any government policy that might dictate a "window" (length of a year or so between cinema and video release) on the industry. **Eddie Macon's Run** (CIC-Taft Video) is a 1983 production that enjoyed a very limited release here, mainly as a support at the drive-ins. (Remember them?) **Runners** (CIC-Taft) arrives here straight on video without a cinema release. **The Lords Of Discipline** (CIC-Taft) arrived here straight on video without a cinema release. **The Lords Of Discipline** leased on video.

The questions to be faced in drawing up any self-regulation on the industry are: (a) are films such as *Eddie Macon's Run*, which plainly had little appeal to cinemas and distributors alike, to be denied audience access within the "window"; (b) are the *Runners* of the industry, those films considered only for an art circuit, to be denied that same access; (c) are films that fall into the category of *The Lords Of Discipline* — released in the States last year, previewed here by the distributors then virtually shelved in the "too hard" basket, only to be picked up by the specialist houses at the same time as its video life has commenced — to go the same way?

Eddie Macon's Run

Concurrently, the place to expose these films cinematically has shrunk, while on the other hand, via the home screen of television, cable and video, being enlarged. One hopes, for the investor's sake, that overall the market as a whole balances out and the films still have the opportunity to (a) reach wide audiences, and (b) make a quid. One also hopes that government shortsightedness in attempting to regulate the video industry might be balanced with some sober thinking about the way this industry has opened more doors (at home) than it has closed (at the cinema).

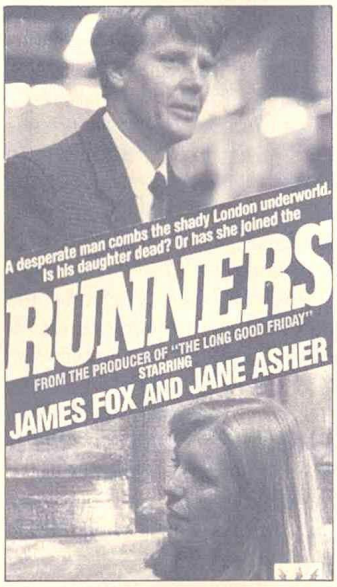
Now to the product. *Eddie Macon's Run*, adapted and directed by Jeff Kanew from the novel by James McLendon, takes a number of familiar themes: a young con, innocent of any real crime, on the run; a rendezvous with wife and son at the Mexican border; a veteran cop on his tail — a man as much out to prove something to himself as to do what he is paid for.

The con, Eddie Macon, is played by the personable John Schneider (of the dreadful *Dukes Of Hazzard* TV series), the veteran cop by Kirk Douglas, who is pushing 70 but still able to cut it. He knows the *genre* back to front, only previously this kind of story involved men on horses with gunbelts and blazing six shooters. They were called *westerns*. Douglas is spot-on when he says that the western never died — it took on other guises, such as *Star Wars* and *Eddie Macon's Run*.

Runners is a different kettle of fish altogether. It was produced by Barry Hanson (the man at the helm of the marvellous *The Long Good Friday*) and penned by Stephen Poliakoff. The film concerns itself with an 11-year-old girl who disappears one day after leaving home on her bicycle and her father, Tom Lindsay (played by James Fox), who will not accept the police verdict that she is dead. Two years later, motivated by a group called SUPPORT (formed to bring those with missing relatives together for mutual consolation), Lindsay heads for London in search of his daughter Rachel, and with the help of a woman with a missing son (played by Jane Asher), makes a foray into the side of the city rarely seen by the tourists. *Runners* is neither a light nor easy film to digest; it is neither complicated nor off-putting, merely being the type of entertainment that offers no easy answers. For any parent with young children, it is a thoughtful and disturbing story.

The Lords Of Discipline came in the wake of *An Officer And A Gentleman* (also now released through CIC-Taft Video). You can imagine the wheels turning over in the minds of Paramount executives when the time came to give the go ahead on *Lords; An Officer* had gone through the roof at the box office and here was another of the same ilk. It didn't work that way. *Lords* does not have the strong female influence and appeal of *An Officer And A Gentleman*, and, although *discipline* figures in both, in *Lords* it is of an evil and spirited nature, not pushed up front through the antics of a sadistic drill sergeant. Novelist Pat Conroy's story (adapted by Thomas Pope) delves into the generational influences of a Southern military college at the time of the first black's enrolment and acceptance.

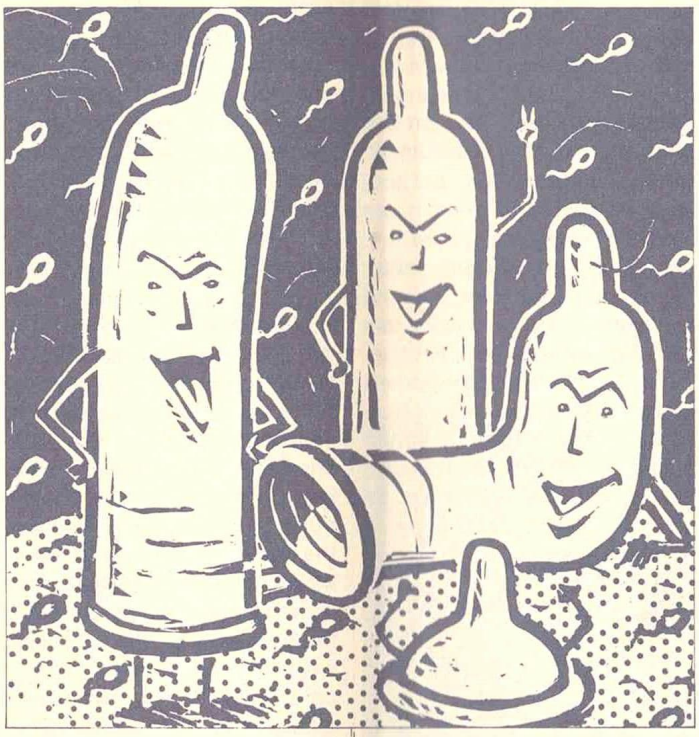
Gabriel Katzka, the director, has woven an engrossing tale out of Conroy's complex novel, one that opens up a lot of interesting suppositions as to what might go on in other exclusive military colleges . . . say, those in England and Australia. It would be a great pity if entertainers such as *Eddie Macon's Run* and thought-provoking films like *Runners* and *The Lords Of Discipline* were to be withheld from wide public access — while rubbish of the type taking up more and more shelf space in a lot of video shops — *Eat My Brains, My Lovely* etc — are given free rein. — *Denis Whitburn*


A desperate man combs the shady London underworld.
Is his daughter dead? Or has she joined the
RUNNERS
FROM THE PRODUCER OF "THE LONG GOOD FRIDAY"
STARRING
JAMES FOX AND JANE ASHER

Runners

SEX

RUBBERS BOUNCE BACK



The condom is making a comeback on the Australian contraceptive market. "Rubbers", which have for years been the butt of bad jokes and comments like "making love with a condom is like taking a shower in a raincoat," have found a new image and a bigger slice of the market in the Eighties. Local manufacturers and distributors estimate that sales have increased by between 10 and 15 percent over the last 12 months and claim that sales will continue to climb.

One factor behind the renewed interest in barrier methods of contraception is the consistently adverse publicity which has surrounded oral contraceptives and the IUD concerning the link between these methods and the incidence of cervical cancer and thrombosis. This has resulted in a swing away from "hi-tech" contraception back to the condom, and to a lesser extent the diaphragm and various spermicidal creams and foams.

An increase in the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases and the resulting publicity has also contributed to a resurgence in prophylactic contraception. Herpes, for some time the word on every libertine's lips, and talk of an AIDS epidemic have given favorable publicity to the much maligned sheath, and its effectiveness in preventing the spread of STDs.

The third factor behind the condom's comeback is the improvement of its image through the use of aggressive marketing techniques by some newcomers on the local market, as well as by the updating of the product by established manufacturers. The condom has climbed out of the pharmacist's bottom drawer and found its way into colorful display boxes in chemist shops and in some Australian states, even on to supermarket shelves.

Illustration by Mark Tremlett

Although its success rate as a contraceptive is not as high as that of the Pill, the sheath is generally considered to be 97 percent effective. According to *Penthouse* sex advisor Dr Carl, its effectiveness will be increased if it is used properly and in conjunction with a spermicidal foam or cream. "Seepage underneath the condom when relaxing after ejaculation should be avoided," says Dr Carl. "It is most important to take it off carefully. It is also important to avoid putting it on the wrong way. If you put it on in reverse, and have reached a stage of sexual excitement which results in seminal fluid release, even one drop, then that drop will be transferred to the outside of the condom when you turn it over." Dr Carl also cites bursting as another factor which can reduce the condom's effectiveness, although this is apparently a rare occurrence.

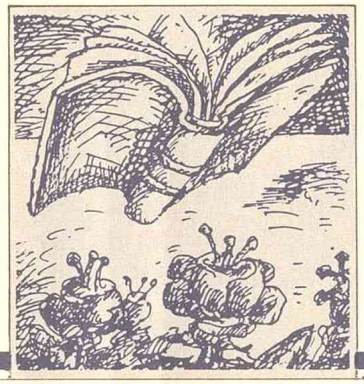
Regional Manager of the London Rubber Company, Graham Duckworth, whose firm's Durex range of condoms is the second biggest seller in Australia, confirms Dr Carl's statement. He claims that the Durex condom has an average tensile strength greater than 3900 psi, and is stronger than an operating theatre glove. "A two centimetre strip will take a weight of more than four kilograms," says Duckworth, "and the air inflation test given to our products shows that the Durex condom will hold 40 litres of air — the equivalent of two buckets of water — before it bursts."

Duckworth's company, which claims more than a 10 percent share of the local market, has recently updated its product range to include the Fiesta, which comes in an assortment of colors, and the Excita, a ribbed condom. "These products have been offered for variety," he says. "There are no smutty connotations. We have a standard family planning product as well as fun products. Other companies present their wares more like sex aids. We don't like that."

A relative newcomer on the Australian market, Protex, which imports a colorful range of products manufactured in the USA, reports booming sales. Manager Graham Porter attributes that to aggressive marketing, competitive prices and the release of its latest brand, Scentuals, which is aimed at the female purchaser who makes a major part of the market. The comprehensive Protex range includes a variety of novelty condoms.

The largest local seller and the only local manufacturer, Ansell, with more than an 80 percent market share, is the world's largest condom manufacturer. Ansell spokesmen agree that the elimination of the embarrassment factor has helped to increase their sales in Australia, claiming that their figures also reflect the proposition that the condom is making a serious challenge on the contraceptive market in the Eighties.

Can the consumer expect anything new in the condom range at his local pharmacy? There is one area of development and that is the combination of spermicides with condoms, as lubricants or as creams inserted in the teat. There has been some conflict over the efficiency of the spermicidally lubricated condom, with opponents claiming its increased effectiveness has not been substantiated. Ansell currently has preliminary approval to produce a spermicidal condom which will include a spermicidal cream in the reservoir, and the company believes that this sheath will consolidate its domination of the Australian barrier contraceptive market. — *Darcy Markovich*



WORDS

LIMP LITERATURE

The "non-book", typified by cruddy cartoon compilations and totally irrelevant books of lists, has become an accepted and often profitable genre. The subject of sex, being a sure-fire bestseller, has inevitably become the focus of this spurious medium, which has recently spawned a variety of second-rate but successful sex dictionaries and anthologies of abnormal acts such as *Sex Lives Of Famous People.* Peter Kinnell's **Book Of Erotic Failures** (Futura $4.95) is of this ilk. Thankfully, the author hardly bothers to justify this latest literary irrelevance. After a cursory two-page introduction, he launches straight into his lists of embarrassing erotic incidents. The majority are mundane.

The Stupidest Viennese Artist is almost funny: "Johann Heer of Vienna was having an affair with Frau Gambul, the wife of a friend. In a post-coital moment, Frau Gambul switched on the television in the bedroom to watch *Gone With The Wind* and, as she lay there, Johann, an amateur artist, picked up a felt-tipped pen and drew a romantic landscape on her bum. Then he fell asleep. When he awoke, his lover had gone home to her husband. Frau Gambul got into bed at home just before her husband, a taxi driver, returned home from his late shift. As he gave her a goodnight kiss, he noticed Johann Veer's landscape. It was only when the couple compared the signature on Frau Gambul's bum to the one on a picture in the dining room that Johann had given them that she admitted what had happened. The husband was granted a divorce."

That's the best; you can safely forget the rest.

Accidental Times (Allen & Unwin $19.95), a compilation of bizarre, absurd, poignant and horrible Victorian adventures culled from forgotten editions of *The Times,* doesn't quite make it into the non-book category. It's more of a quasi-book — one of the myriad products of an age in which publishers recognise that no-one even has time to scratch themselves, let alone read some weighty tome from cover to cover. *Impact* is what these compilation efforts are all about, but the problem in this case is that 19th Century journalism had about as much impact as a fart directed at a charging bull.

This report, dated August 6, 1851, is a fair example: "A most extraordinary circumstance connected with the accidental death of a fisherman named Brat occurred at Plymouth on Friday. He was the master of a trawling sloop, and on the day in question was out in his vessel fishing, when he fell overboard and was drowned. About four hours afterwards his son, who was mate of another trawler, and who had not heard of the accident, was hauling up his trawl, which appeared unusually heavy. After some difficulty, however, the trawl was hove on to the vessel, and within it was discovered, to the consternation and dismay of all parties on board, the body of the mate's father."

Bizarre, poignant and horrible, it is. *Accidental Times* does provide a unique insight into the everyday world of the Victorians, in which people apparently carried nitric acid in their pockets, drank unknown substances with dire effects, went bathing in raging torrents when they couldn't swim and frequently shot and hanged themselves by accident. But somehow the convoluted journalism of that period, in which the words all seem to run into each other like a plague of blind rodents, produces a state more akin to exhaustion than horror. And let's fact it: when it comes to newspaper reports featuring the ridiculous behavior of deluded individuals, the 19th Century had nothing on the 20th.

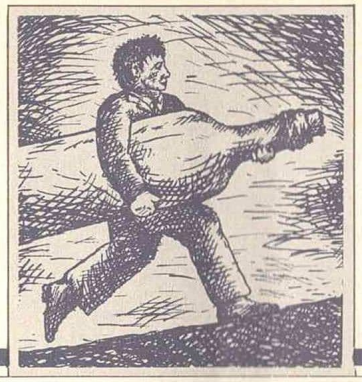
Bob Crichton's lavishly produced manual **Photographing Women** (Macdonald Futura $29.95) presents a comprehensive and attractive look at the historical, technical and creative aspects of photographing the female form. The text includes sections on basic photography, the anonymous nude, the individual woman and the female form outdoors. According to Crichton, the most recent trend in this style of photography is the "rehumanising" of the female form as a result of the rise of feminism. While the professional will probably find many of the author's observations trite, *Photographing Women* will provide the amateur in this field with some valuable insights into the art of creating special female effects.

It has been suggested that chess as a spectacle is about as interesting as watching the grass grow. Not when Walter Tevis writes about it. Following the success of his two previous novels, *The Hustler* and *The Man Who Fell To Earth,* Tevis has produced a rivetting psychological thriller, **The Queen's Gambit** (Pan $4.95).

The protagonist, Beth Harmon, grows up in an orphanage where she finds two ways to escape the depression and drudgery of her surroundings — the tranquilisers administered to her every morning and night and chess, as taught to her by the old janitor Mr Shaibel. He is soon made aware of the eight year old's prodigious talent when she begins to beat him with ease after playing for only a couple of weeks.

By the time she's 18, Bess is a mess, abandoned by her lovers and ruined by alcohol and tranquilisers. But her talent and obsession for chess has led her into a challenge with the world's greatest chess players in Moscow, a game with consequences which reach far beyond the bounds of the chess board.

— Colin Hinton



LIQUOR

THE CHARGE OF THE LITE BRIGADE

In Australia, beer drinking used to be second only to breathing as a national pastime. It was part of our way of life, and if you didn't like a drop of the amber fluid you risked being dismissed as a social outcast, or worse still, a wowser.

That was certainly so 20 years ago, and probably held true even 10 years ago. It's not true any more. Despite the loud claims of some patriots to our drinking prowess — citing the legendary efforts of Bob Hawke during his Oxford years amongst other examples — the fact is that Australians don't drink as much beer as they once did. There are a number of reasons for it, but per capita beer consumption has been falling by four percent a year across Australia for the last three years. And it's something that has the country's major brewers, Castlemaine Tooheys and Carlton and United Breweries, very concerned. (Castlemaine Tooheys is the result of a merger between NSW brewer Tooheys and the Queensland Castlemaine group, while Carlton last year acquired the extensive NSW brewing interests of Tooth & Co.)

However, there is one area of the beer market with some potential for limited growth — low alcohol brews. Introduced in 1978, low alcohol beer (excluding brewed soft drinks) now accounts for about 10 percent of the $3.5 billion gross retail annual turnover in the beer industry. And with a shrinking beer market, low alcohol beer is becoming increasingly important in the battle between the brewing giants for vital market percentage points.

That battle is being fought with great ferocity in the most lucrative state market, NSW, which accounts for more than a third of national beer sales. It's a market that's currently shared fairly evenly between the big two, to the virtual exclusion of the smaller company brands.

The low alcohol beer market in NSW is dominated by the old Tooth & Co brand LA, and the new Toohey's brand 2.2 Lite. LA, with a 2.7 percent alcohol content, has been the top seller for many years, but Tooheys is aiming to turn the tables with the bold introduction of a 2.2 percent Lite, offering even more "staying power." To help push the product they've utilised the talents of Doug Walters in their TV advertising campaign.

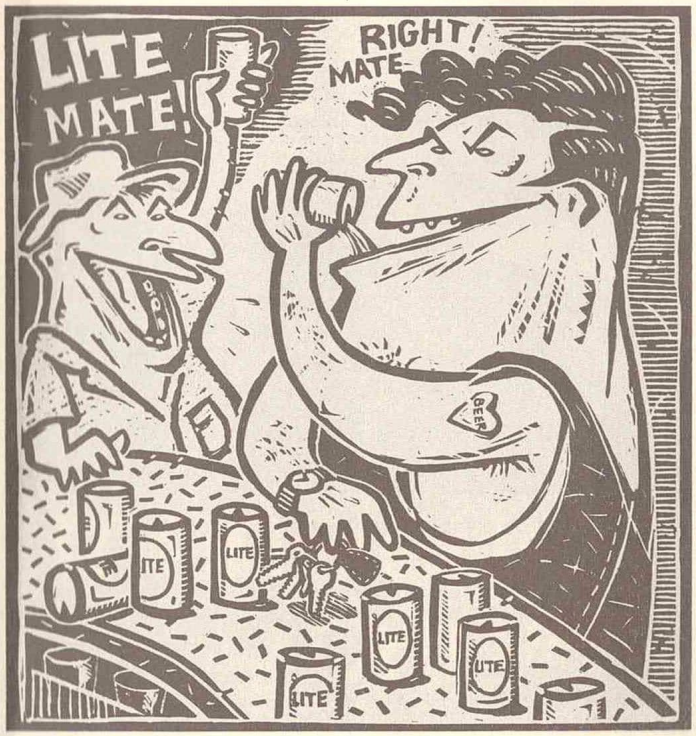
Also entering the NSW fray has been Carlton with its national big seller Carlton Light (3.3 percent alcohol), and Western Australia's (and Alan Bond's) Swan Brewery with its Special Light. Swan Special Light is an innovative super-low alcohol brew. It has an alcohol content of only 0.9 percent.

The NSW brewers are taking a lot of notice of the Swan drop; it accounted for 16 percent of last summer's beer sales in WA, and its acceptance led to a remarkable five percent increase in beer consumption in that state.

Swan Special Light could initially only be sold in NSW as a soft drink, but after lengthy negotiations with the State Cabinet, Swan is now able to call its Special Light a "de-alcoholised beer", sell it in licensed liquor outlets and have it taxed as a beer. It was an important victory for Swan, now being able to directly take on the big brewers in the market-place.

It remains to be seen just how receptive NSW drinkers will be to a "de-alcoholised" beer. They have a bad record when it comes to brand loyalties with regular beers, but then there's been a string of failed incursions by interstate brews into the market as well.

The strategies used to promote the low alcohol brews are very similar. Prominent sporting personalities — Doug Walters with Tooheys 2.2 Lite and the Marsh brothers, Graham and Rod, in the case of Swan Special Light — push a line that is intended to appeal to the sense of "responsibility" of those drinkers who want to "bat on with the boys." Obviously, uppermost in the minds of the advertisers (and presumably the audience) is random breath testing.



Another integral part of the campaigns is the public image of the sportsmen involved. All are well known as being classically "Australian": easy-going blokes, good yarn spinners, larrikins, renowned for liking a punt and, most importantly, an ale. The intention is to deflate the strongly held belief among many true-blue-singletted Aussie males that real men drink real beer and only wimps and poofters can stand to sip the low alcohol stuff.

The other great hurdle for low alcohol beers is taste. In fact it has always been a bit of a stumbling block for them; there have always been technical problems in retaining a traditional beer taste while reducing alcohol levels. However, the Swan Brewery have come up with an innovative brewing process which they claim retains the full-brewed flavor of their Special Light. And they've tackled the question of taste head-on in their ads, having the Marsh boys arguing whether their brew's greatest virtue is its taste or low alcohol content.

The battle for the vital NSW low alcohol beer market is in full swing. With such a fickle market there will be some very nervous advertising executives monitoring the coming summer's sales figures. Only then will they know if they've blended the right mix of taste, alcohol and imagery. — *Rod Carter*

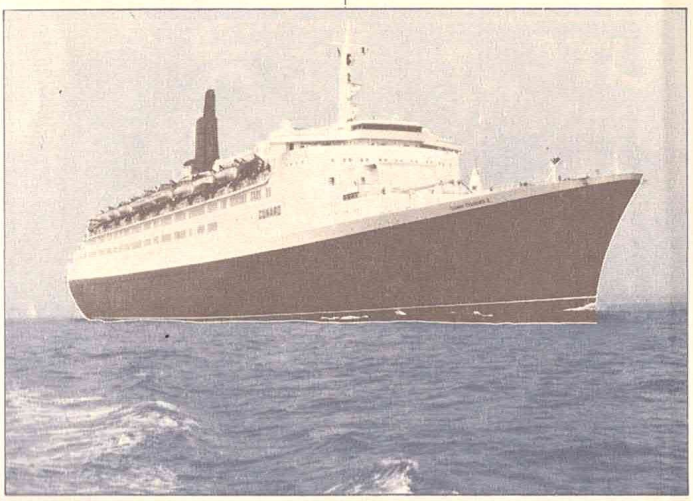
Illustration by Mark Tremlett

TRAVEL

SHIP OF JEWELS

It can be instructive to take a close look at your friends when they come back from holiday: I've found it's a useful way of identifying several new species of bores so far neglected by social anthropologists.

Take, for instance, those who've just returned from a drive-themselves holiday. They will be well-tanned, especially on the right arm, and noticeably twitchy from dodging the homicidal drunks who make Australia's appalling roads such a killing ground. Their talk will be mainly about speeding tickets and near misses; there will be very little about what they've seen, which was mostly roads anyway.



QE2 . . . lady in the lives of the super-rich

Slightly worse are those returning from overseas air package holidays. They're pale grey and loopy with jet lag, and their conversation will tend to centre on the officious little creep in the customs hall who unrolled every dirty sock and snipped them for the bottle they were trying to smuggle, or the great time they would have had if some exotic Asian bug hadn't tied knots in their innards.

Also well worth avoiding is the returned adventure holiday freak, who regards travel as useless unless it involves pain, suffering and filth. They are usually pale from the abominable food and gut-wrenching diseases found in the remote hellholes they've recently blundered through; they have great welts on their carcasses from the punishing weight of backpacks and will insist on telling you in great detail about how they got this scar on a near perpendicular goat track.

Far worse than all of these lost souls is the character who's just disembarked from a cruise ship. Not only is he tanned, healthy, relaxed and fit enough to bite through iron bars, he's full of tales about hanky-panky against a backdrop of moonlit waves, wild, cabin-hopping parties and whole stretches of time spent in an alcoholic fog. That's true for any sort of cruising, even the downmarket kind you find offered by some of the ships cruising out of Australia.

There's little doubt that the cruise bore is the worst travel bore of all, and I now have to warn you that an even more intolerable variety is likely to become more common early in 1985 — the upmarket cruiser. He not only exhibits all the infuriating characteristics of his cheaper brother, but assumes an automatic superiority based on his being able to afford it at all. He's moved away from mass market travel with its hordes of giggling office girls and packs of alcoholic roughnecks; he's seen plutocrats at play and he likes it.

Be warned — there will be a lot more of these haunting the better bars looking for someone to buttonhole, so that they can relate the tales of their marvellous foray into the world of the super-rich aboard the *QE2*.

This glittering monster, renowned in Australia chiefly for its ability to paralyse Sydney as rubbernecking drivers clog the Harbor Bridge, will visit us again on February 14. With it will be one of its sister ships, the fabled *Sagafjord,* which is intended for those who consider the *QE2* a bit vulgar. Add to that a planned flypast by Concorde, bearing yet more of the absurdly overprivileged to join these floating fortresses of wealth and privilege, and you've got a heady mixture of romance, tradition and plain old-fashioned envy.

It also means that you, too, can savor the delights of being an upmarket cruise bore. The top price for a *QE2* luxury suite on the 95-day New York-Australia-New York cruise is a wallet-shrivelling $340,725 (don't rush — those tickets were all sold months ago), but for about $2000 a head you can have a one-week taste of high life on the high seas.

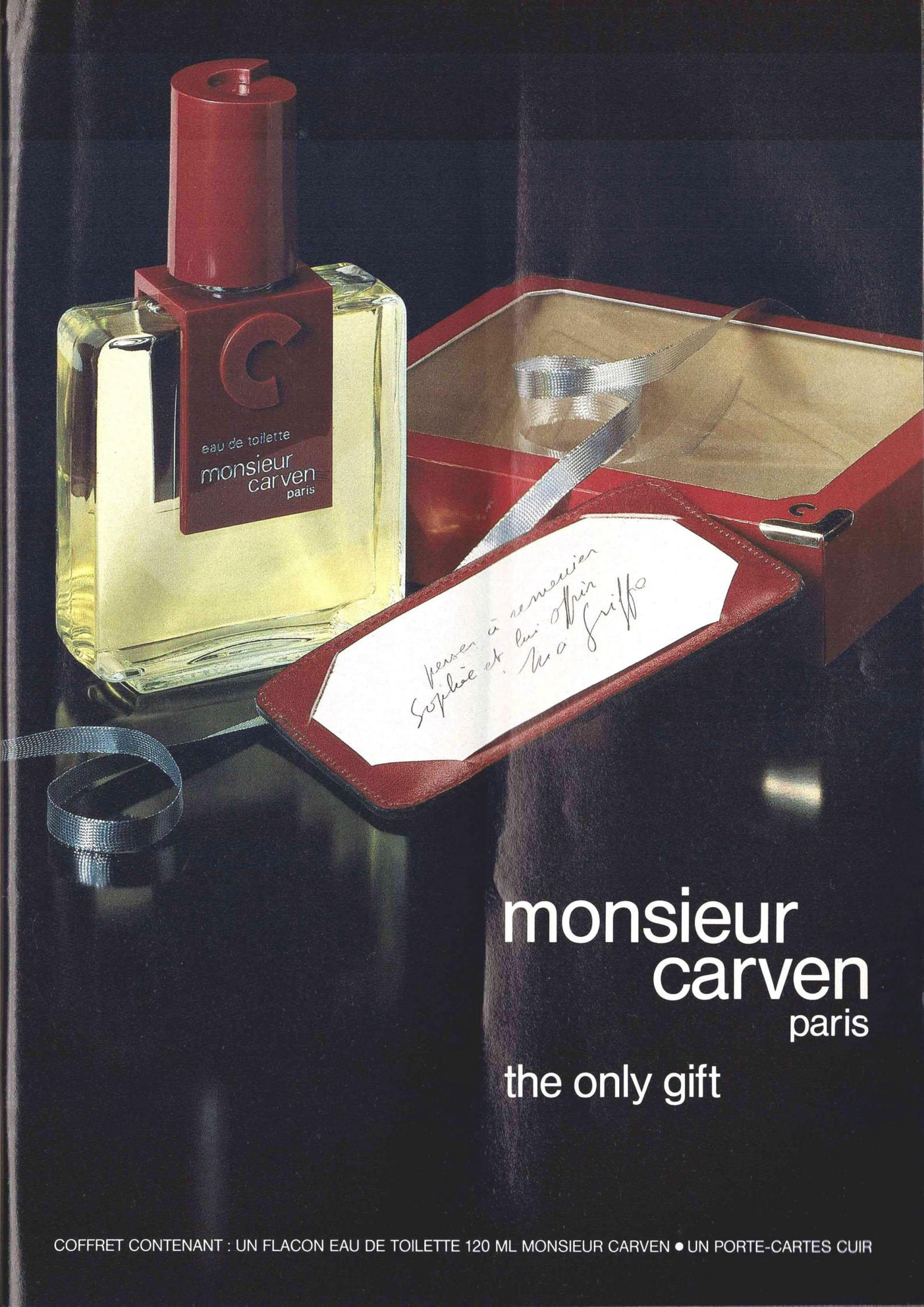
You can join the *QE2* in Auckland, flying there free on Pan Am's business class, and spend a week cruising to Sydney; or you could join her in Sydney and spend a week cruising to Fremantle via Hobart, again flying back free.

At that price, it's good value. Your cabin may be smallish, but it'll be bigger than the phone booths offered in the bowels of cheaper ships, and it will have an added advantage in that you won't be able to hear a single thing from the cabin next door. Every cabin is served by a steward and stewardess, and Cunard's regional manager for Australia, Sarina Anderson, says it's a basic principle that everyone, from the megamillionaires to the humbler classes should enjoy exactly the same standard of service.

The ship itself, of course, is a marvel. She steams at a spanking 28.5 knots, which would leave the mass-market tubs gasping well behind, and in addition to twin stabilisers augmenting the stability of her 67,000 tonnes, she has every type of advanced nautical gadgetry. The public areas would put the most glittering hotel to shame, and she has four restaurants, six bars, four nightclubs, a casino, health club and the Magrodome — a vast retractable glass dome which encloses the entire aft quarterdeck at night for entertainment and disco and which opens in the daytime for poolside breakfast, lunch and sunbathing.

She doesn't come here often, and it's bound to cost more next time. So if you're a lounge lizard, a cruising freak, a would-be gigolo or simply someone who gets a buzz out of a burst of conspicuous consumption, I suggest you give it a go. You'll be buying one of the great travel experiences if you do.

Sell your BMW; flog the customised Harley; pawn your granny's pacemaker. Otherwise, you could run the risk of being buttonholed by me in one of the better bars . . . without a comeback. — *Fred Baker*



COFFRET CONTENANT : UN FLACON EAU DE TOILETTE 120 ML MONSIEUR CARVEN • UN PORTE-CARTES CUIR

Australia is built to burn

FIRE POWER

BY PHIL ACKMAN

Fire — the most terrifying and uncontrollable of all natural disasters — is an integral part of this continent's environment. Thousands of bushfires are reported across the country every year, but none have ever caused the devastation left behind by the Ash Wednesday fires of February 16, 1983, which left more than 70 people dead and caused hundreds of millions of dollars worth of damage. These were the worst bushfires in recorded history — their intensity was compared with that of a post-atomic firestorm. And ecological factors and an amateurish and antiquated approach to firefighting in Australia point to a certain repeat of that dreadful day. This description of a blaze that rampaged through the Dandenong Valley on Ash Wednesday evokes the impact of those few hours on a population whose lives went up in flames.

Photos by J.P. Zajac, Project Aquarius, and the Victorian Country Fire Authority

FIRE POWER

Afterwards, in the cool, dark places where firefighters gather, they concluded what everyone had known: that there is a time for a few hours every few years when no force on Earth can stop a bushfire.

There is a time when not 20 men nor 20,000 can do a damn thing but watch the bastard fireball through the countryside, whoop through the trees, roar across the grasslands, zigzag between the ridges and smash and burn everything in its way. There's a time when a really big fire develops a superheated life of its own, throwing offspring — spot fires — up to 20 kilometres ahead of the main blaze and creating winds so fierce that whole 15 metre trees are pulled straight out of the ground by the uplift.

Anyone caught in the open in such fires is doomed. But it's not from the flames or lack of oxygen. They're doomed because the radiant heat is so intense that all the blood rushes to their bubbling skin, and their brains and organs just shut down.

If you want to fight fires, if you want to fight real fires that'll wring every ounce of adrenalin out of your body until there's nothing left but your heaving lungs and fear itself, then you fight fires in south-eastern Australia.

"It's a scale — the McArthur Fire Danger Index — and I dialled up all the variables for February 16, 1983," says David Packham, a boyish 45-year-old scientist who is one of the world's foremost experts on bushfires. "I dialled them in, things like wind speed, temperature, fuel load and so on. Well at 70 on the scale, you understand, you have extreme fire danger.

"Pretty well any fire that starts will go out of control. The scale stops at 100 and on Ash Wednesday, well, I did the figures and it was 107."

To understand what happened in the worst bushfires in half a century you'd need to know that when the weather bureau forecast clattered out of the Victorian Country Fire Authority teleprinter at 6.30am on that Wednesday, the meteorological boffins had decided to stab at a top temperature of 34° with a 25km/h northerly wind blowing straight off the desert and a humidity level so low that it was like breathing sand.

By 9.30 they'd changed their minds — temperature and wind speed up, humidity down — so that by mid-morning even sand would have been like a refreshingly cool drink. It wasn't long before the Adelaide Hills were in flames — well in time for the midday news.

Left, top and bottom: Scenes from the periphery of Ash Wednesday fires that ravaged south-eastern Australia.

The time was 3.23pm, the temperature was hitting 40, and the fire index scale 107. The Belgrave-Beaconsfield fires — as they would soon be known — were officially alight. By nine o'clock that night, 21 people would be dead in the Belgrave-Beaconsfield region, including 12 volunteer fire fighters.

In firefighting jargon, Belgrave was a "hot" fire — which is to say that if you perished in it, your remains could be recovered with an ash pan and brush.

"When we had nearly reached home — we were rounding the last bend — I saw flames on the right hand side of the drive," says Jennifer Coates, a waitress at the local pub who rented the house in Bird's paddock with her husband, Tony. At 3.26pm Bruce Davey, the Belgrave fire chief, and three lieutenants, arrived. "I noticed that a fire was extending from a driveway in Bird's paddock," says Davey. "The temperature at this time was very hot and with the prevailing dry conditions and the wind I could see the fire was heading into the residential area of Belgrave Heights," he continues. It took him only two minutes to decide that the whole area should be evacuated.

"At the birth of a fire you've got just one twig on fire and it spreads to the next one in a way we don't thoroughly understand," says David Packham — the bushfire expert — whose qualifications in bushfires were soon to be enhanced by some uncomfortable personal experiences.

"I did the calculations for the Belgrave-Beaconsfield fires and what they showed was that after 15 seconds the fire would have travelled five metres and the flames would already have been one to two metres high. After four minutes it would have travelled 600 metres and the flames would have been 14 metres high.

"Taking all things into account, the fire could probably have been put out within the first 30 seconds. After one minute it was certainly unstoppable."

In Bruce Davey's superheated world, the fire was now 26 minutes old. "Spot fires were occurring all around us," he would later tell the coroner. "The heat was intense, the wind severe, and ash and embers filled the air. Homes nearby caught alight. On the arrival of the fire-front, windows were sucked out and homes were enveloped by fire."

And so, in the slanting afternoon sun on these smoke-smudged hills, poured a stream of wailing sirens, helmeted men, whirring helicopters and their TV crews, sightseers — the sort who would picnic on the beach as a tidal wave arrived — and desperate relatives and friends. At four o'clock, when the teleprinter at CFA headquarters clattered out the weather report again, there was already a hot, ragged panic in the hills.

"Temperature 41.5," proclaimed the weather bureau. Hot enough to fry eggs on the pavement — and people in their cars.

"Humidity 16 percent. Wind from the north-west at 30 to 40km/h."

The whole thing was a witch's cauldron, and the dry, roasting wind was like a dragon's breath. According to the jargon, the area was already "well alight." "Well alight" effectively meant a full-scale battle for 140 fire trucks and 1000 men. It would also mean 238 houses destroyed, 10,000 hectares of ground ravaged, the creation of 250,000 tonnes of useless waste, and 21 dead.

At four o'clock the Victorian State Electricity Commission began shutting down power to Belgrave Heights. In the chequerboard that is the electricity grid, a white square had just gone black. Lights went out, the radio was dead, the TV blank. There was just the sirens, the smoke, the orange glow, and that terrible stillness that fills homes without power.

> The Beaconsfield fires rated 100 on the scale on which fires are measured. That's like being inside an exploding volcano

"At 4.27pm we flew around the perimeter of the fire. The entire eastern flank at this stage extended in an approximate straight line of five kilometres from Bird's paddock to the vicinity of Mountain Flat Road, Narre Warren East." So said one aerial fire spotter on Ash Wednesday.

There is nothing particularly important about five o'clock on Ash Wednesday, except that, somehow in the scheme of things, there is always a time when the actors seem to assemble for the roles they will play. Betty Adamson, for instance, was well and truly intoxicated when neighbor and odd job man, Ralf Gorges, knocked on the door of her Beaconsfield home to say that the fires were just three kilometres away and heading in their direction.

But would the 53-year-old pensioner identify the crisis and evacuate the scene? As Gorges would later tell the coroner, Mrs Adamson was not in a condition to leave. After all, as she told him on that most tense afternoon, she simply didn't have a thing to wear.

Meanwhile, around at the Medwin family home in Carpenter Road, Upper Beaconsfield, father Barry Medwin and son Colin had decided that it was appropriate for the men of the house to lend some assistance with the firefighting operations. They bade what proved to be their last farewells to wife and mother Allison, and to 17-year-old daughter and sister Kerry — who were left at home on their own. Allison and Kerry Medwin were destined to become victims of the blaze.

Five o'clock was also the hour selected by bushfire researcher — and Upper Beaconsfield resident — David Packham to pick up two American bushfire experts, 45-year-old Montana engineer, forester and chemist Chuck George, and his solidly constructed colleague Dave Blakley from Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport. For the new arrivals it would be a warm evening — warm beyond their wildest expectations.

Then at 5.40pm, as the unwitting cast were assembling for their roles, came some new stage direction from the weather bureau. The bureau was now predicting a south-westerly wind change, which would hit the Belgrave-Beaconsfield firefront between nine and 10 that night. Winds would average 50 to 70km/h, gusting to 90.

Into all this arrived Ian Balcombe, council truck driver and local firefighter, who would spend the night on the Narre Warren Number Two truck while Dorothy, his wife of 13 years, fought and died on the Number One truck. Twelve were incinerated on that Narre Warren Number One truck that night.

But the horror of this holocaust was still three hours away. It was at about six that the power to the Beaconsfield water pumping station failed, which meant that from that moment on, every glass of water, every squirt from a garden hose, suddenly came from a non-renewable source. When the two holding tanks ran dry — and they would — hoses would squirt only drops of wet dust.

By six o'clock, according to the jargon it was now a "going fire." The noise it was making rooted some to the spot, and made others flee.

"At about 1800 hours (six o'clock) Senior Constable Hockley and I were directed to Payne Road, Beaconsfield," says traffic cop Les Kovacs. "In an effort to check houses we were forced to ride through blinding smoke, falling trees and flames. We found numerous houses ablaze, with very few people trying to put out fires. We were often forced to stop and try to clear the smoke from our eyes and lungs . . . there were many people in their homes trying to prepare for the flames, while others just stood and stared as the fire approached. Some appeared to be in

FIRE POWER

shock — not knowing what to do or where to go."

The normal reaction for most of us in the face of great terror is to flee. It therefore remains a mystery why some people — admittedly a very small proportion — will actually hurl themselves in the direction of the terror itself, as though it had some irresistible magnetic force.

Such a man was Keith Busbridge, a 195cm, 130kg giant who hitchhiked to the scene of the Ash Wednesday fires in such a screaming haste that it took two months before authorities could be sure he had been there at all.

Council water tanker driver Matthew Cunningham knew Busbridge was a big man the moment he had stopped his truck at the police road block. "When this man was standing at the door of the tanker I was looking straight out the window into his eyes," says Cunningham.

"He did not have a clue where he was going or how he was going to get there. He spoke in clear English and was agitated . . . very toey. He was really desperate to get to the fires. I took him to the water stand about 500 metres up the road. A fire truck drove straight on to the road — I noticed the words "Panton Hills" on the top — and the guy said to me: 'Here's some of my mates. Do you mind if I go with them?' "

When Busbridge leapt on to the back of the Panton Hill tanker, he joined six others; seven people in all with just 90 minutes left to live.

It is about this time that Dave Packham and his two American colleagues, now changed into US Forest Service uniforms, arrived at the Packham's mud brick home in Blue Ridge Road, Upper Beaconsfield. "I believed that the fire was almost out at 6pm and that a change — a mild change — was coming. Even up to 30 seconds before the fire actually came, I was convinced it was all over," recalls Packham. "I really stuffed it up."

In fact, by 7.55pm, David Packham's optimism had almost been realised. Flames in Upper Beaconsfield were flickering just a docile metre into the air. There was even discussion of a back burn — the setting of one fire to deny fuel to another. Beaconsfield, however, would shortly become one of the most unpleasant spots on Earth.

At 8.14 — over the town of Omeo in north-eastern Victoria — the hot, dry gales born in the deserts of central Australia collided with a vast cold front driven north from the Southern Ocean. In the main street of Omeo at that moment there was a sudden, very noticeable, blustery wind change.

At 8.37 the change hit Frankston, which is to say it was knocking at the door of Melbourne itself.

A strange thing about this wind change is that you could plot the wind's movement across the state by the automatic alarms which were set off as it passed. They responded to the heat and the dust accompanying the wind — as if they knew that somewhere not so far away the sky would turn orange from the flames.There were 177 false alarms in Victoria that day — 177 false fires.

"There are three really important factors in bushfires," says David Packham. "The first one, the overwhelmingly important one, is the quantity of fuel. In fact with Ash Wednesday, the last time the fuel had really been cleared out was in the previous fires of 1939. Ash Wednesday had reached, in fact, maximum fuel concentration.

"The second factor is the moisture content of the fuel. At 12 percent moisture a fire might spread at a metre a minute whereas at six percent it doesn't spread twice as fast, but actually six times as fast. On Ash Wednesday the moisture content was only two or three percent.

"The next factor is wind velocity because you never get really disastrous fires unless the wind is more than 30km/h — which we had. When the change came and the winds gusted to 90km/h, it wasn't just three times as bad. There's this complicated relationship, you see, which makes 90km/h winds actually nine times worse than those of 30km/h."

Left: Attempting to control the inferno proved futile. The fires were likened to the impact of 16 atomic bombs.

At 8.43pm, so the records show, the wind change hit the sprawling outer suburb of Dandenong. The gusts were even more intense than expected, hitting 98km/h. Two minutes later, the wind arrived at Cranbourne, a mere hop, step and a jump from Upper Beaconsfield, where police sergeant Geoff Sheers was driving his squad car up and down the main road bellowing into the vehicle's public address system: "A wind change is coming. Be prepared to evacuate the area."

"We then travelled north along Emerald-Beaconsfield Road," notes this most unflappable cop, who shortly observed an entire church in flames. "I then became aware that we were trapped and surrounded by fire," says Sheers, who proceeded to lead a convoy of 20 vehicles to the fragile safety of a tin garage at the rear of the local CFA radio room, from where he observed things now forever etched in his mind.

"The flames from the fire were reaching the tops of the gum trees with pieces of lighted bark and debris being blown through the air by the gale force wind," says Sheers. "It could only be described as a roaring inferno with fireballs travelling through the air. Houses and shops were blowing up as the fires reached them, causing gas bottles and tins of paint to explode."

The Beaconsfield fires had been magnified to a huge extent by the wind change, now burning on a front of 15km, instead of only one or two kilometres. And every metre of fire front was grinding out 100 megawatts of power. Australia's total power output is only 22,000 megawatts at any given moment. So that every 220 metres of Ash Wednesday fire front matched the generating capacity of every power station in the whole country. Beaconsfield alone made the Victorian State Electricity Commission look like a kid with a battery toy.

David Packham puts it best when he explains the scale on which fires are measured. At a scale of one you could fight it with a knapsack, or a garden hose. From one to five you need a red truck and a siren: you're talking of flames two metres high. From 10 to 20 it's just too fierce to fight face on. You need bulldozers, firebreaks and water bombs from the air.

And what of Beaconsfield on Ash Wednesday? According to Packham the scale of that fire was 100, which is like being inside an exploding volcano.

Dr John Brotherhood, an environmental health researcher attached to the Univer-

sity of Sydney, rates radiant heat as the number one killer in bushfires. Brotherhood estimates the average human being has less than five minutes to live when exposed to flames three to four metres high and a flame front five to seven metres distant. "Of course," he says "levels on Ash Wednesday were 15 to 20 times higher than that."

Which brings us back to David Packham, Chuck George and Dave Blakley who, shortly before the wind change, found themselves at an Upper Beaconsfield lookout known fondly as the Pink Elephant.

"We looked at the glow in the distance," says Packham, "and my interpretation was that the fire had started to go out, although I couldn't understand how it was going out so quickly. And then I saw a big, black cloud — a dust storm. I realised something was badly wrong because when a wind like that gets to a fire, all hell breaks out.

"We rushed to our car and drove 200 metres before the wind got to us and just shook the car like it was a twig or a leaf. When we got home there was a constant shower of sparks and the wind had dropped. I thought we'd just missed out." That was the second mistake Dave Packham made that night.

"What you might call Stage II occurs with the arrival of the fire front itself," says Dr Caird Ramsay, a CSIRO researcher developing expertise in the unlikely science of what happens to a building in the path of a bushfire.

"We would be talking about windows breaking or cracking due to the heat of the fire, and we would certainly be talking about the melting of outside PVC pipes and gutters — which is probably a good thing because they will fall away from the house. There is also a possibility of embers getting into the roof cavities and the possibility of cotton or linen curtains smouldering because of the radiated heat. Embers could be blowing under the doors or even through the wall vents at this time because the air pressure is now much lower inside the house.

"We are also talking, of course, about very high winds approaching cyclonic conditions which could typically unroof a house or in extreme cases — very extreme — blow it apart."

For David and Helen Packham and their two American house guests in US Fire Service helmets and overalls, there was a moment when they doubted — for just an instant — the scientific wisdom that it is far better to remain inside than to abandon ship, because even the biggest firefront will pass in a couple of minutes while no solidly constructed house will burn to the ground in less time than it takes to boil an egg. "At one stage for about 10 seconds I thought we'd got it all wrong," says Packham, who confesses that he had stopped being a scientist and started thinking like a concerned, desperately concerned, householder instead.

"I thought no house could stand it. We were in the middle of something that was just incredible. The curtains started to smoulder, windows cracked, the wooden window frames in the study burned through."

"Stage III," says Caird Ramsay, "is what we call 'flashover.' It is preceded by internal fires — perhaps in the furniture or the roof space. It could be that even for able-bodied people there are just too many fires inside to extinguish. Fires inside start to jump from one place to another. Combustible gases fill the house. There is so much heat build-up that everything in the house spontaneously combusts.

"With flashover, there can be an increase in inside air pressure and windows can blow out. It is much more likely to occur after the fire front has passed. And you can have multiple flashovers which give the impression that the house is exploding."

David Packham's house did not reach flashover. He did not die. Nor did his wife Helen or Chuck George or Dave Blakley. A bowl of wet pancake mix left in the kitchen, however, was completely cooked, probably in the two minutes it took the Ash Wednesday firefront to pass by.

If those fires proved anything, they proved that there is nothing more deadly than to make an attempt to run for it. Allison and Kerry Medwin got just two metres. They also proved some fires cannot be fought. Dorothy Balcombe, Keith Busbridge and the others proved that.

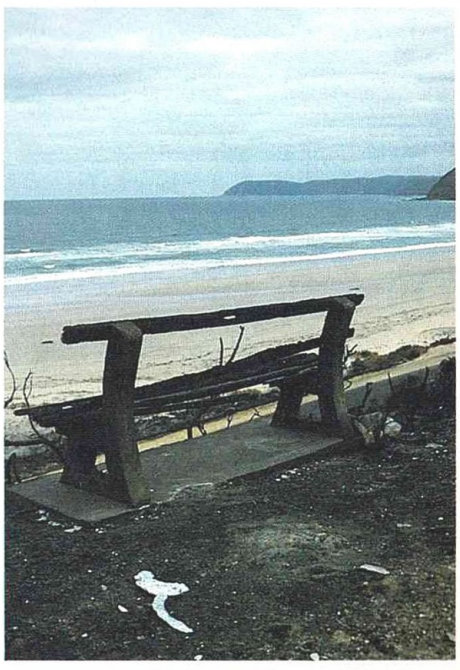
They proved that panic is deadly and that running through flames will turn you into human torch. Yet they also proved that ordinary people can survive the worst fires if they stay inside, play it smart and tough it out.

They proved once again that Australia is built to burn and that if you live in a "bushland setting" and can see leaves from any window in your house then for a few hours every few years you could be in the midst of what might well be another Ash Wednesday.

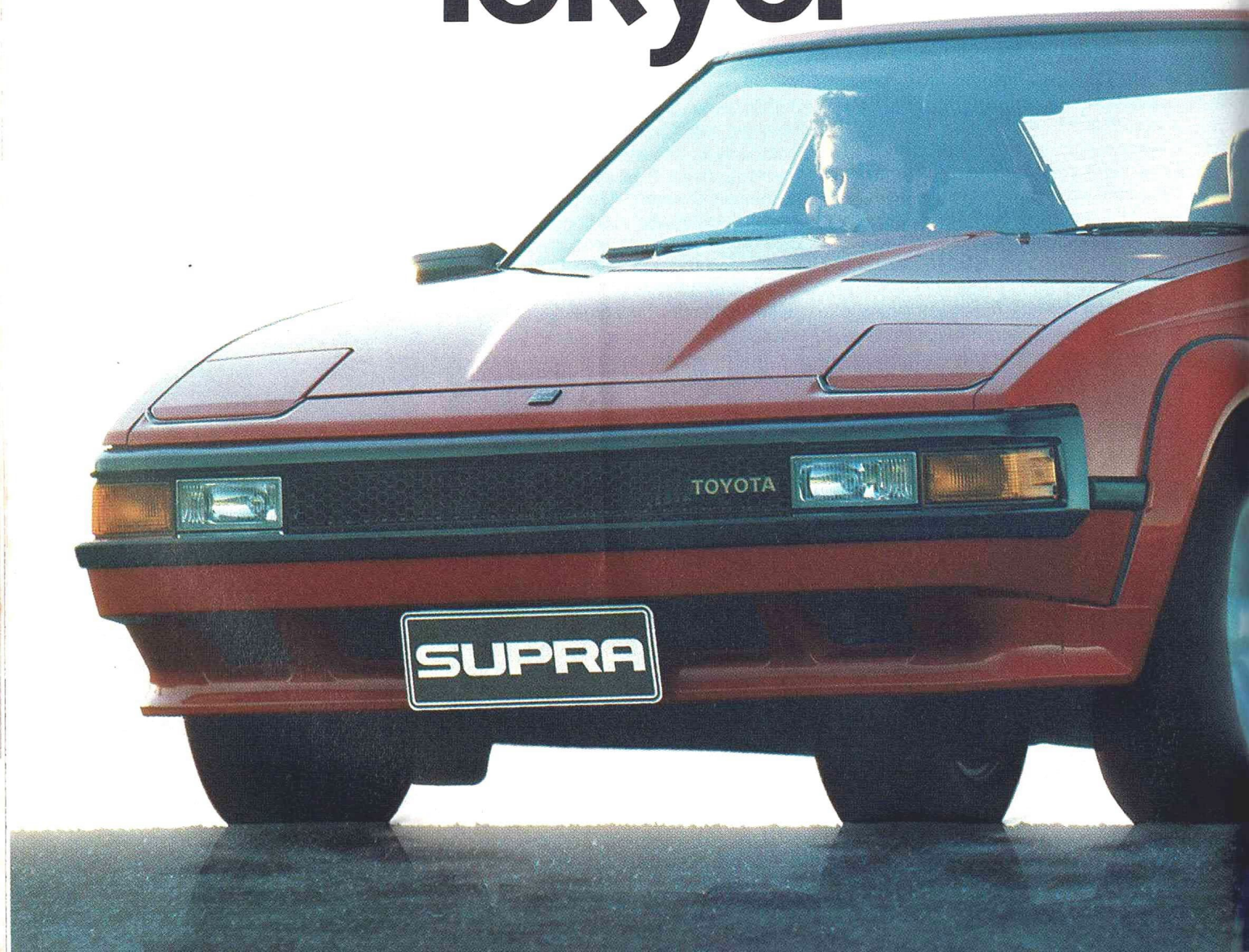
They also raised, for David Packham at least, a sharp philosophical point that because big fires need a lot of fuel, fuel reduction will mean smaller fires. "It is a complex question," he says. "There are many factors, but it comes to this: what do we want? Big infrequent fires beyond control or small frequent ones to deny them the fuel?"

Afterwards, in the cool, dark places where firefighters gather, they discussed these things and something more: that fire itself is still in charge.

Below: Testimony to the ferocity and extent of the fires. Five died in the car pictured.



New Toyota Supra. Move over Turin, here comes Tokyo.



The areas of Turin, Milan and Modena, in Northern Italy, have long been leading centres of high performance automotive innovation. The home of such legendary names as Ferrari, Maserati, Lancia, Alfa Romeo, Bertone and Pininfarina.

New Toyota Supra is about to challenge such European exclusivity.

It has been described as the most exciting Toyota ever, the flagship of Toyota technology, and with very good reason.

Supra will be as impressive on our highways as it is on an autostrada.

A welcome development from the Spartan style of road warriors, to a luxury sports car that still has the iron will of a Samurai without denying the driver or passengers their creature comforts.

SUPERLATIVE STYLING.

You simply have to look at Supra to see that it is a super car.

The wedge-shaped styling literally slips through the air. With wind resistance cut to a mere 0.35 drag coefficient (the same as a Porsche 944).

The retractable headlights, built-in driving lights, bumper and air-scoop combine to present a picture of aerodynamic efficiency and elegant design.

A LUXURY INTERIOR THAT IS ANYTHING BUT SUPERFICIAL.

Sit inside and you enter a world like that of Luke Skywalker, ready to win the 'car wars'.

The instruments are completely digital. Concise and easy to read. They feature a speed sensor, zone display tachometer and fuel gauge, and a segmented water temperature gauge.

Another impressive element is something the driver will rarely look at, but always use. The sports driver's seat is adjustable 8 separate ways, including something no other car has in Australia, a pneumatic lumbar support.

And there are so many standard luxury features on this anything but standard car, the only major options to consider are electric sun roof, genuine Toyota air conditioning and cruise control.

Supra is really in a class of its own!

A TRUE SUPER POWER.

If the engine is the heart of a true performance sports car, Supra is indeed in excellent shape.

SUPER RESPONSIVE

It is powered by Toyota's remarkable new, low inertia Super Responsive engine.

A 2.8 litre, OHC 6 cylinder, electronically fuel injected power plant that turns the accelerator into an exhilarator. With engineering that refines this raw ability into sheer driving enjoyment.

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE SUPERMAN.

Unlike some sports cars you don't have to work like Fangio to handle the excellent performance.

Supra's road manners are impeccable.

The flared guards house low profile 60 series tyres on 7" alloy wheels that hug the road.

The rack and pinion power steering, combined with all-independant Toyota Suspension Tuning, and a limited slip differential let you hug corners and straighten out sharp curves.

You also have a choice of a snappy 5-speed manual transmission, or responsive 4-speed overdrive automatic.

Not only does Supra go quickly, it also stops quickly and surely with 4-wheel disc brakes.

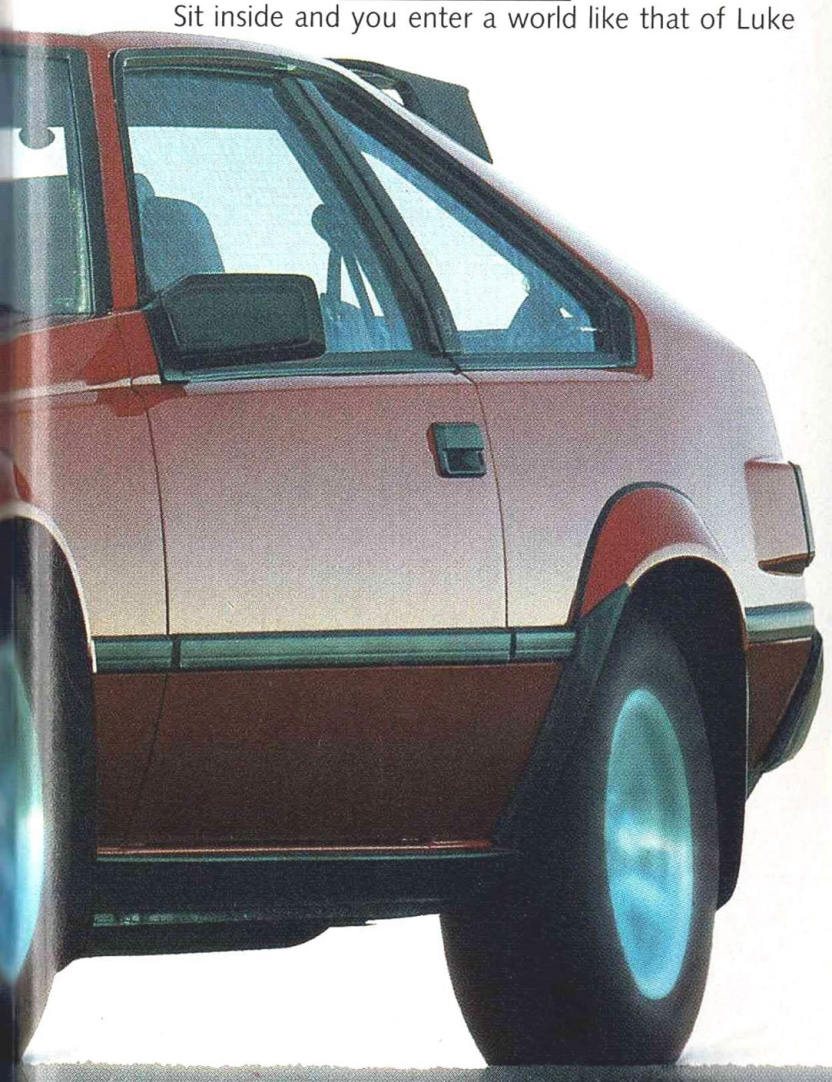
The other thing that sets Supra apart from other high performance sports cars is that you don't have to be a Howard Hughes to buy it.

SUPRA. THE SUPER TOYOTA.

It is a car designed for people who take their driving seriously, and place demands on their machinery.

So you get true European performance with the solid, reliable character that distinguishes Toyota.

The new Supra proves that Toyota is well on the way to becoming the new super power in affordable performance.



TOYOTA

Oh what a feeling!

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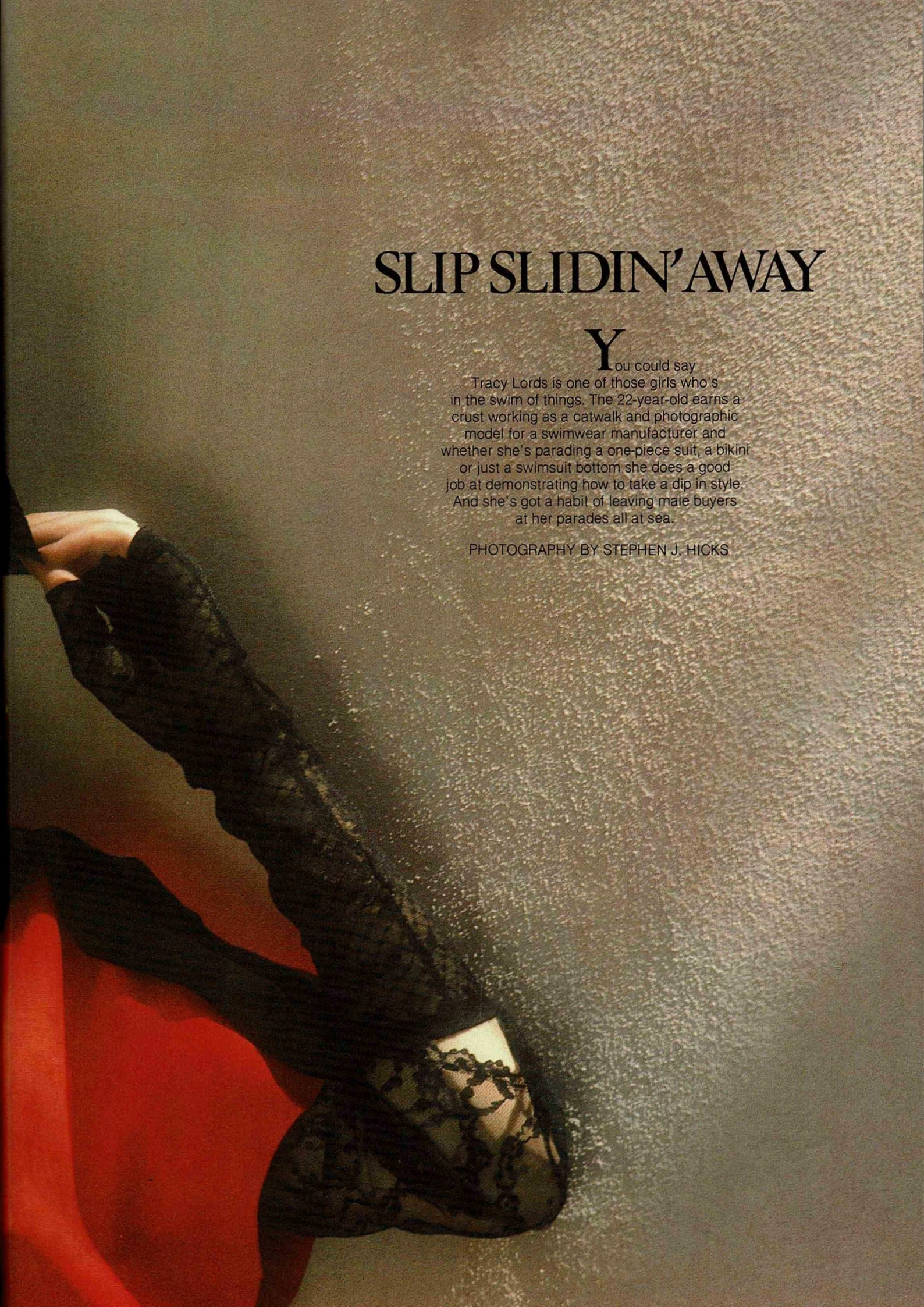


SLIP SLIDIN' AWAY

You could say Tracy Lords is one of those girls who's in the swim of things. The 22-year-old earns a crust working as a catwalk and photographic model for a swimwear manufacturer and whether she's parading a one-piece suit, a bikini or just a swimsuit bottom she does a good job at demonstrating how to take a dip in style. And she's got a habit of leaving male buyers at her parades all at sea.

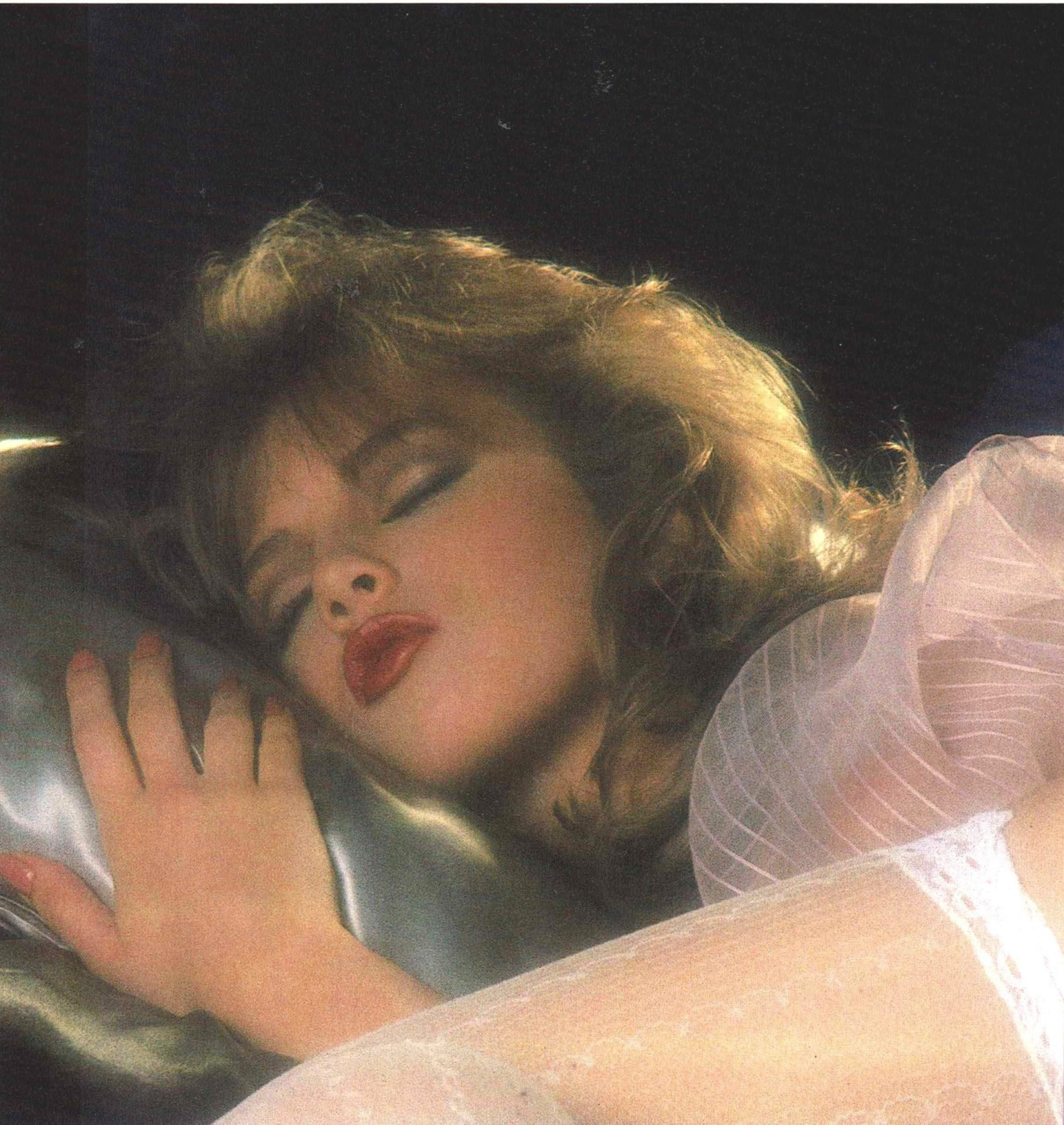
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN J. HICKS

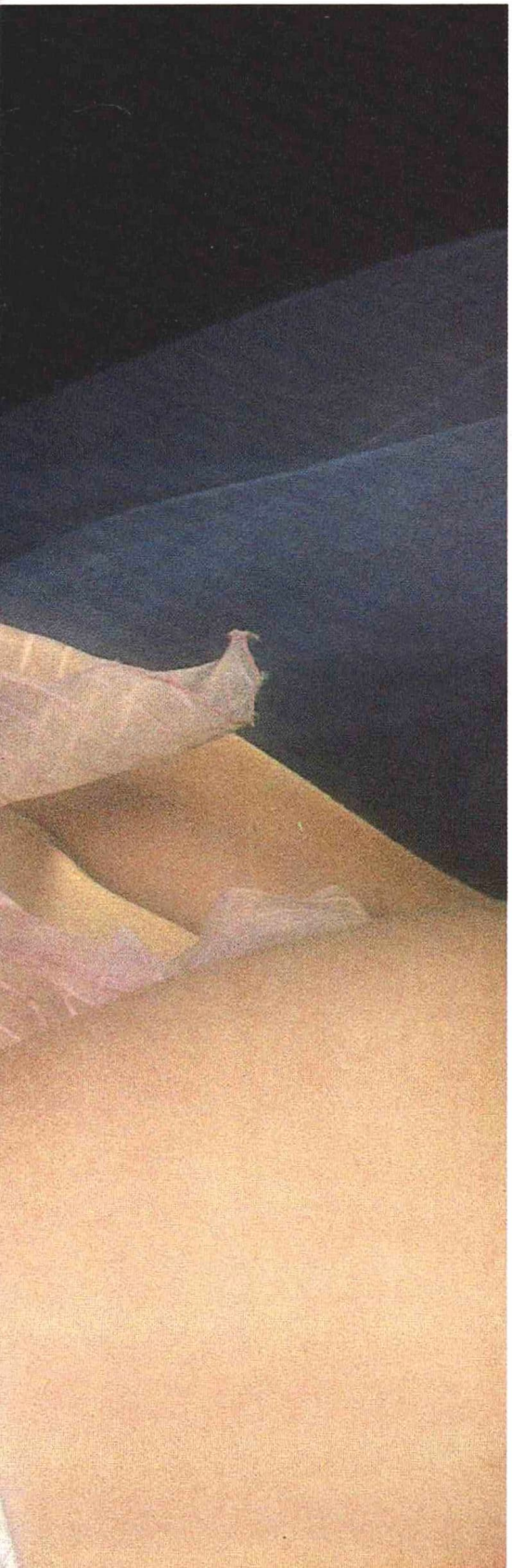
Tracy does a fair bit of swimming, but her favorite sports are of the more sociable variety. "Exercise is okay on your own, but I'd rather have a partner to flirt with." Tracy was a virgin until she was 19, and she says she is an expert flirt.

Her sexual attention span, however, is brief. "My theme song is 'Slip Slidin' Away'," she says. "I've never really gone out with one man for any great length of time. A few guys have asked me to live with them — but I can't stand the idea of being so domestic. I'd rather be a mistress than a housewife."

"These days sex is a lot easier to find for men," Tracy continues. "It seems to me that men get a bigger thrill from getting you into their kitchens than into their bedrooms." She's set herself a rule never to fix men anything but breakfast.

Tracy says her biggest thrill to date came when she partied at a friend's property one weekend and tore around the place naked on her trail bike at midnight. She hears that uncontrollable lust with the right person is an even bigger thrill. "Maybe so," she says. "I'll still have to feel it to believe it."





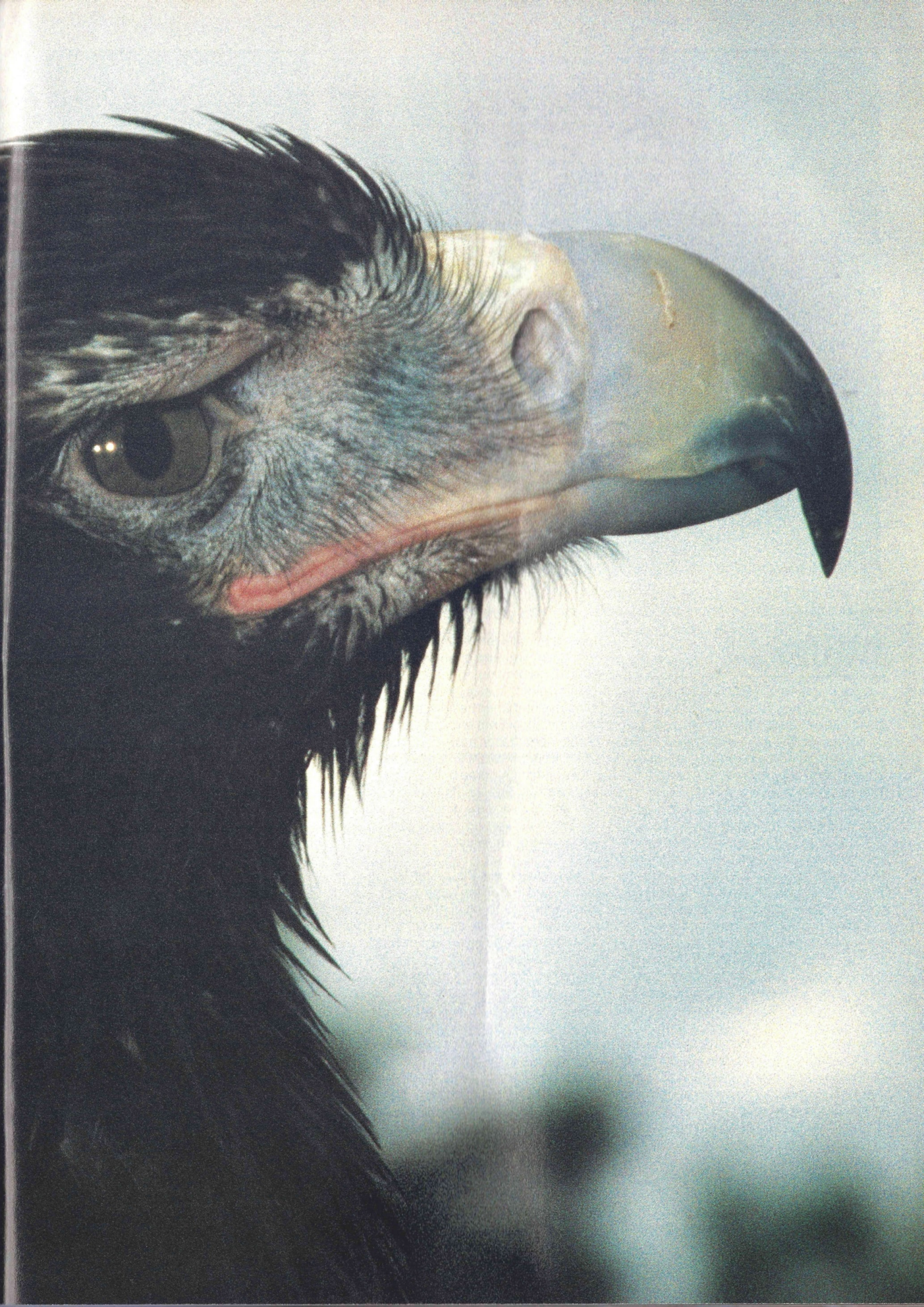
BIRDS IN THE HAND

The ancient art of falconry is still relevant in the 1980s

Men have always admired and envied the killing efficiency of eagles, hawks and falcons, and fantasised about emulating the attributes of these creatures. Man's fascination with the skill and ferocity of the airborne predators, also known as raptors, gave rise to the ancient art of falconry. Although outlawed now in many countries, the "sport" continues to attract a faithful band of adherents wherever it is legal. For these individuals — kindred spirits of the birds they have harnessed — the raptors remain a pure source of inspiration.

Birds of prey are extremely efficient hunters and killers. With eyesight estimated to be eight times as keen as that of man, a raptor can spot a rat

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY FORD KRISTO



A Little Eagle in the process of rehabilitation. Its original owner had clipped its tail feathers to one quarter of their length to keep it captive. An extremely efficient rabbit assassin, the Little Eagle has also been known to bring down swans.

BIRDS

from a distance of 1500 metres. The next step — getting close enough to sink the talons in — requires a body and wing structure suited to high-speed dives. Peregrine falcons swooping earthward toward their prey have been known to exceed 300 km/h. For a mid-air kill at that speed, the impact of collision is enough to shatter every bone in the victim's body — an impact analagous to a man being slammed squarely between the shoulders by a low-flying 747. An explosion of pretty feathers, and it's all over. For a land surface kill, the raptor merely sinks its enormously powerful talons into the body of the prey. Again, death is mercifully quick.

The ruthless efficiency of these airborne predators has led to their symbolic association with warfare. Eagle standards led the Roman legions into battle, and throughout history, the eagle insignia has adorned the uniforms of the military. But there is another side to the collective personality of the raptors. When the situation warrants it, they can be placid and serene creatures, quietly perching in a tree, tending to their young, or soaring gracefully on outstretched wings. Some species engage in dramatic aerobatic displays which to human observers appear to be staged purely for the joy of it.

The schizophrenic nature of the birds of prey ultimately proved to be their downfall. Man, the intelligent earthbound predator, had been watching them with more than simple admiration in mind. If, like the mythological Icarus whose fashioned wings melted when he flew too close to the sun, man could not emulate the attributes of the raptors, then at least he could utilise them. Because of their tranquil and pliable characteristics, some unfortunate birds of prey were to find themselves perched on the fists of their new masters — working for the man, and no longer able to soar across the open skies.

Man seeks, via the art of falconry, to control and exploit the raptors' aggression and eagerness to kill in order to serve his own ends — initially as an aid to survival, and subsequently as a form of sport.

The earliest records of falconry appeared in Central Asia about 4000 years ago. Nomadic hunters flew various species of raptor to add protein to their larders. Later, with the advent of various types of agriculture, men used them to discourage or kill predators of their domestic flocks and control pests feeding on their crops. Falconry probably represents man's first attempt to biologically control a pest species. (The use of raptors in agriculture has continued until recent times. Goshawks were used in mainland China to take out rabbits foraging in beanshoot crops, and were said to be superior to both trapping and shooting as a means of control. Golden eagles have been used in the Soviet Union to attack wolves preying on domestic sheep flocks. One such eagle was retired on a state pension after losing a leg on its 37th wolf hunt.)

From Central Asia the practice of falconry spread in all directions. According to Marco Polo, the emperor Kublai Khan flew eagles to kill wolves and foxes, and began the gradual refinement of the sport. The traditional techniques and accoutrements of falconry were developed in later Asian courts and were adopted in India and the Middle East, where falconry is widely practised today.

Crusaders, merchants and Dark Age adventurers from England and Europe were quick to recognise the potential of falconry while travelling through the East. Enchanted by the concept, they exported both falcons and falconers to the ruling classes back home, who readily adopted falconry as the vogue elitist pastime of the millenium. The Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II wrote a classic treatise on the subject in 1200 AD, translations of which were still being printed in 1943.

As with most blue-ribbon activities a hierarchy of falconry developed, in which people flew birds befitting their status — "An eagle for an emperor, a gyrfalcon for a king, a peregrine for an earl . . . a kestrel for a knave." No-one other than an aristocrat was permitted to own a raptor, and the law was strictly enforced throughout Europe.

In the 17th Century falconry was sud-

denly superseded by the invention of firearms, and the "noble art" rapidly receded to become an anachronistic sport pursued only by retrenched falconers and diehards with a penchant for the personal touch. In England various falconry societies continued the tradition into the 20th Century, although the reduction of rabbit numbers due to myxomatosis and the general decline and subsequent protection of many other prey species (and of the raptors themselves) further limited the numbers of falconers. However, the English still use hunting birds on a small scale, and for around 90 pounds initiates can enrol in a one-week crash course in falconry, then spend another 100 pounds for an Iranian eagle owl before putting their knowledge to use.

Recently there has been a grand renaissance of falconry in the United States, where hunting "meets" are now regularly held. The positive upshot of this growing interest is the accumulation of valuable behavioral and breeding data gained through the captive breeding of some endangered species. This information is published in various enthusiast journals, along with lyrical pieces extolling the virtues of the falcon ("The fire in her eyes, the sweetness of her breath . . . ") This sort of rapturous romanticism often stretches beyond the bounds of reasonable admiration and into the area of bloodlust. One contributor to a recent publication gave a blow-by-blow description of his hawk ripping the nuts out of a hapless squirrel. Falconry is not a hobby for the squeamish.

It is no mean feat to induce a wild animal to work not for its own benefit but to fill a man's belly or provide him with entertainment. When that animal is also capable of free flight, the task becomes enormous. Thus the first falconers — hard men in a harsh environment — employed ruthless and brutal training methods to achieve the desired results. The well-being of the animals was of little consequence to them.

The first step in falconry is to acquire a bird, which may be an eyess (young bird taken from the nest), a passager (free-flying bird in its first year) or a haggard (adult). Eyesses and passagers, more pliable than haggards, are the birds of choice.

The next step is to form a relationship with the raptor. The classical Indian approach, in the case of passagers, is to sew the bird's eyelids together, with the further option of doping it to produce an attitude suitable for instruction. Carefully measured quantities of opium, cannabis, camphor and musk are mixed to form a potent ornithological version of Valium. Modern falconers sometimes recommend a simple alternative — take the bird home. Observing the daily habits of men at close quarters serves to quieten a bird of prey to a remarkable extent. Some trainers have found that perching the raptor in front of the television is particularly effective.

These various methods are known as "manning." It's significant that they aren't referred to as "taming", since a raptor cannot be tamed in the sense that a dog or cat can. The birds merely put up with the trainer in return for a regular reward, and are held captive by a bag of snide confidence tricks. The relationship is based on temporary trust instilled in the bird, whose master is not its friend but rather a slow-moving perch which is associated with hunting success and the relief of hunger. During the manning process the bird is introduced to the furniture of falconry: jesses (leather straps attached to the raptor's legs to facilitate holding on the fist), hoods (which quieten the bird for handling), bells (used to locate lost birds), and the master's gloved fist.

The remaining task is to train the bird to make decisions which would ordinarily be against its better judgement. Through subterfuge and deception the bird will gradually become convinced that it can tackle almost any beast it is duped into confronting. Again, the classical Indian method would involve the use of confidence-building herbs as an adjuct to the dirty tricks department. But whatever method is utilised, the raptor's innate courage is an effective tool for the trainer. Indian mentors could train birds to attack prey which were much too large for a swift and easy kill. Small raptors would find themselves bounding through the undergrowth on the back of a terrified hare, with one talon firmly gripping the victim and the other grasping at the passing vegetation to slow down the pace. The trainer's assurance that his bird in the hand would not be torn in two in the bush was provided by leather breeches fitted between the raptor's legs.

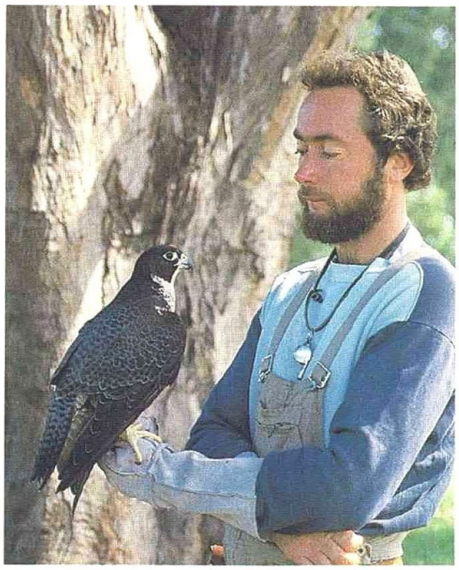
> The art of falconry is now used for reasons far removed from its original intent, under strict monitoring by wildlife authorities

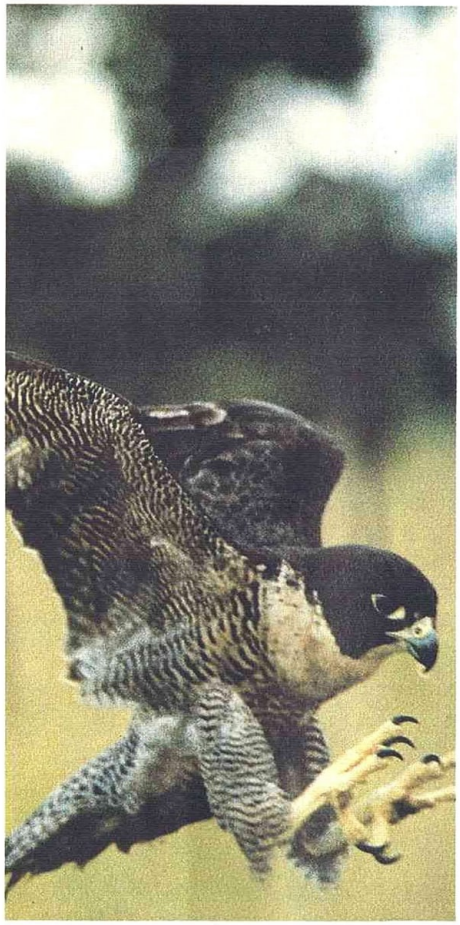
But the falconer's most powerful tool is the posture and state of mind experienced by a raptor when it is in a killing mood. *Yarak* is the Indian word which describes this state, in which the raptor will move like a bullet to attack anything it believes to be a tasty morsel. This behavior pattern is innate and immutable. Once initiated, it must be followed in sequence to its end-point, thus: yarak — sighting of prey — flight and chase — the kill — feeding to repletion. Birds which fail to complete the sequence experience stress, expressed by either lashing out at the surroundings or quietly sulking. So the falconer's task is essentially to arouse and hone the *yarak* by clever manipulation, yielding a bird which is consistently eager to kill on command.

With the bird in the appropriate mental state, it is taught to attack various types of dead lures with small food rewards attached. Fox and rabbit skins are commonly used for this purpose. The technique aims to imitate the behavior of likely prey species, with the objective of programming the bird for tactical hunting. Later, competence with various live lures which have been handicapped in some way (heavily weighted pigeons and rabbits with broken legs were popular lures in traditional falconry) brings the raptor into the realm of big game hunting. More advanced techniques include working the bird in co-operation with dogs. Pointers, setters and spaniels were originally bred expressly for this purpose. The noise of these animals crashing through the undergrowth flushes out game for the waiting falcon to swoop on.

The theory of falconry provides that each bird has an ideal flying weight, and any variation from this produces a decline in performance. Maintaining a bird at its ideal weight while ensuring that its diet is adequate for top physical condition is not easy. The Asian falconer's tactic was to force-feed drugs to the bird in order to induce vomiting. A hood (normally worn by the bird, not the falconer) was used to keep the identity of the perpetrator a mystery. The bird must never identify the drug dispenser as the same individual who has become the only human being worthy of its trust. This is vital because raptors are easily insulted, and never forget or forgive.

Working birds require other forms of "maintenance." Their talons must be maintained at the right length to prevent disease, and their beaks also require periodic trimming for peak efficiency. During flights to game the birds often break feathers, and just a few damaged or missing feathers can seriously affect the aerial prowess of such a finely crafted animal. To remedy this the birds are regularly "imped." New feathers are scavenged from other birds' moults, then matched and trimmed to size, while the damaged ones are cleanly cut transversely. A small length of wire and some glue is used to fuse the two open feather shaft ends. Well imped feathers match the originals so closely that a raptor could have a large proportion of feathers repaired and still be able to hunt normally. The imped plumage





Trickery and deception induce the falcon to feed from the glove. The man-bird relationship is merely one of temporary trust and dependence on behalf of the falcon.

BIRDS

eventually grows out, to be replaced by natural feathers at the next moult.

Falconry is not without its peculiar hazards, as illustrated by a recent anecdote concerning a Central Asian falconer who stupidly wore a wolfskin hat on a hunt. Having struck at a wolf and missed, his eagle flew off in a dark mood and the young Mongolian set of on horseback after it. As he was cresting a hill, he found the bird. It was two metres away from his face and closing rapidly, its talons targetted on the wolfskin hat . . .

Modern trainers use safety glasses when working with larger birds. Without them, it's easy enough to end up watching your other eyeball soaring off into the distance, clutched in the talon of a misguided eagle. Although often unintentional, such injuries weren't uncommon in traditional falconry.

Falconry was first attempted in Australia in the 1880s by landholders using indigenous birds of prey. However, it was not until 1937, when a more scientific approach was adopted by the naturalist David Fleay, that viable working birds were produced. Fleay's charges included white goshawks, Australian peregrines, and amazingly, a wedge-tailed eagle. One of the goshawks used to delight in slashing at the falconer's face and neck as it flew past, necessitating the use of a baseball mask. (Incidentally, Fleay was probably the only white man ever to be bitten on the bum by a thylacine or Tasmanian tiger, a species assumed to have been extinct shortly afterwards but now the subject of a recent sighting.)

Falconry as such is no longer legal in this country, although as recently as the early Seventies it was used in an attempt to stop pigeons and seagulls from colliding with jet aircraft at Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport. Obliged to look at all available means of reducing the risk of "bird strike" damaging or even bringing down aircraft, the civil aviation authorities tried falconry as a means of controlling the unwanted birds. Expert falconers from England were employed to train and fly the Australian falcons, but they were unable to get them to fly consistently when required. The falcons would apparently not work in anything but ideal weather conditions. Eventually the problem was solved by removing the pest birds' food supplies in the vicinity of the airport. The trained falcons were deprogrammed and sent back to the bush.

The art of falconry is now used in Australia for reasons far removed from its original intent, under strict monitoring by wildlife authorities. The main use of falconry techniques is in the meticulous training of injured raptors. Birds delivered to wildlife authorities or zoos with gunshot wounds or injuries resulting from collisions lose their condition while recovering. Such birds are sent to rehabilitation facilities operating in most states. They're manned by extremely dedicated and highly trained volunteer conservationists whose only object is to see the birds in their care ultimately liberated back into the wild.

Steve Wilson runs such a rehabilitation centre at Glenfield, NSW. He uses falconry to bring recuperating birds of prey back to peak condition and to sharpen their hunting skills. Wilson relies on the traditional principles of training, but uses them in a highly modified and humane manner. He does the work in his own time, and funds most of it himself.

"Training an injured raptor up to its former flying and hunting capabilities can be a slow and frustrating experience," says Wilson. "But seeing a bird back in its environment and able to fulfil its natural role gives me a real feeling of accomplishment. I can share the joy of the raptor's freedom, and at that point the time and effort become worthwhile."

All Australian birds of prey are protected species — either because their populations are dangerously low or their habitat is greatly diminished. Extinction is a real possibility for some species. The case of the American peregrine illustrates the pressures humans can exert on natural populations of raptors. The ill-effects of the persistent pesticide DDT have reduced the number of wild American peregrines by about 90 percent. Fines of up to $5000 apply in some Australian states for taking, killing or injuring raptors. The protection in some cases includes the birds' eggs and nests.

That isn't, however, the main reason for the outlawing of falconry in Australia. It's a moral consideration. Falconry for fun, as opposed to falconry for the rehabilitation of injured birds, in no way benefits the individual falcon or the species as a whole. The law recognises that there is no justification for the taking, caging, training and working of wild birds for the purpose of providing a perverse form of entertainment. In some countries where falconry is legal (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg, for example), recent legislation has been aimed at the abolition of the sport.

Falconry, the result of a unique relationship nurtured initially to assist man's survival on Earth, has ironically done an about face. Now the survival of many species of raptor is seriously threatened by the conditions created by man. By the time a species becomes "highly endangered", it is usually too late to save it anyway. If we allow the most majestic, the most glorious of all bird species to fade into oblivion, it will be the severest indictment yet of our human priorities.

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Mad Max goes to Hollywood . . .
and escapes unscathed

THE YEAR OF MEL GIBSON

Anyone who expects to be riding the crest of a wave all the time is kidding themselves," says Mel Gibson. "It'd be like wanting to live forever, or something. You're hot and then you're not . . . that happens to everybody."

Gibson took a swig of beer and gazed out at the snow-covered countryside. This was his lunch break, but already people were beginning to arrive at his trailer door with messages and requests. Would he consent to an interview with an English newspaper? A photo-session? An endorsement for an old Gibson film, newly released on video? No-one has to ask, just now, whether or not Mel Gibson is hot property.

I'd had my own share of such irritations while trying to arrange the interview. It had taken a long, long time — because getting to see Gibson now requires storming the wall of stone-faced studio secretaries, personal assistants and PR men with whom Hollywood traditionally protects its chosen few. Finally I tracked him down to Canada, where he was shooting *Mrs Soffel*, a new romantic drama in which he co-stars with Diane Keaton.

We eventually met on a small location unit deep in the frozen

PROFILE BY PAUL MANSFIELD

wilderness 50km north of Toronto. Gibson shook hands warmly, and accepted a bottle of beer from the box I'd brought along. When I told him about my experiences at the hands of his PR representatives he laughed sympathetically. "Unfortunately you need people like that," he said. "You really do. If you're out there and just open to everyone, people are going to 'pirate' you. So you have to put a check on it. It costs a couple of bucks but you've got to do it, because you're in a very vulnerable position."

It can be a difficult thing to grasp — and maybe it's even more difficult to feel sympathetic — but Mel Gibson now finds himself in an awesome situation. There's no doubt that international movie stardom can be as wonderful as we've been led to believe, and that it can be one long nightmare if things go wrong. Gibson right now is at the point of no return — looking superstardom in the face, as it were. How it will all work out for him is anybody's guess.

Mel Gibson, then aged 12, first set foot in Sydney in the summer of 1967. His family had emigrated from their native America because Gibson senior had no wish to see any of his sons sent off to fight in Vietnam. Mel had been brought up in Peekskill, New York; suddenly he found himself in a Sydney school speaking with an American accent, with the other kids giving him a hard time because of it. "They'd put it right on you — say really harsh, black things to you and about you — and coming from where I did I'd get offended, and at that age of course, very upset."

But Gibson adapted quickly. "It was quite important for my acting, actually. You have to observe a culture first in order to fit in, and being a hybrid I tended to see both my old and my new cultures from a little distance. That's what this job's about too, so it was good training. A lot of actors are people who've been uprooted and put somewhere else — people who've had a lot of changes forced upon them."

From school Mel moved on to Sydney's National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA). Before long his good looks had landed him his first screen part in a teenage flick called *Summer City*. "It was an abomination — just an abomination. I had to stay upright on my board and look dumb, which was good, because that was all I could have possibly handled at the time." But it was nevertheless a part, and parts were rare enough in what was then the embryonic Australian film industry.

After leaving NIDA Gibson had more luck. The day after graduation he was picked to play the lead in the low-budget (and therefore potentially dreadful) *Mad Max*. Everyone knows what happened next. The film proved to be a sensation — a massive box-office success — and Gibson was immediately signed to do a sequel. Gibson received as much acclaim as the movie; in fact his name became virtually synonymous with *Mad Max* — both in Australia and overseas. Offers of similar parts poured in, only this time with much more money involved.

Surprisingly, Mel turned them all down, and instead made *Tim*, a sentimental weepie which was panned almost everywhere and never given a release outside Australia. Why did he do it?

"Because I knew even then that it's crucial in this business not to become stagnant — not to keep doing the same things over and over again. It's tempting, because you know you can do it, and therefore you're safe. But nothing good was ever produced by people who just wanted to play safe."

So Mel joined up with the State Theatre Company of South Australia and toured doing productions of Shakespeare. He had a newly acquired wife, Robyn, and a soon-to-be-acquired family of three kids. He seemed well and truly settled in Australia.

> "I was hungry for it at first, but now I'm bloated; jeez I need a break. It's been a tough year in many ways"

By this time it was around 1980: the time when things really began to happen in the Australian cinema. Peter Weir, Bruce Beresford, Fred Schepisi and Gillian Armstrong were all making good movies, *and* attracting international attention. *Mad Max II* was released, and was cited as the best foreign production of the year by the Los Angeles Critics' Association. Gibson made *Gallipoli* with Peter Weir, and that too was a commercial success.

Suddenly Hollywood was sitting up, taking notice, and bringing out the chequebooks. Weir, Beresford, Schepisi and Armstrong all headed off to the US, and Gibson went with them, at least temporarily. Weir and Gibson notched up another success with *The Year Of Living Dangerously*, and the cheque books came out again. By this stage Mel Gibson was well known internationally, a star in Australia, and fast acquiring a reputation as a new sex symbol. The men with the Golden Pens were after him, determined to claim him.

And that brings us more or less up to the present. Gibson left Australia in March 1983, knowing that he wouldn't be returning for at least a year. He played Fletcher Christian in the new version of *The Bounty*, directed by New Zealander Roger Donaldson and filmed in England and Tahiti. That was followed by *The River*, in which he starred opposite Sissy Spacek as a tough American farmer battling to save his livelihood — another three and a half months' location work, this time in Tennessee. And then straight to Canada for his part as Ed Biddle, condemned murderer and ladies' man, in Gillian Armstrong's *Mrs Soffel*.

When I caught up with him in Toronto, Gibson had been living out of a suitcase for nearly 12 months, and the strain was beginning to show. "I was hungry for it at first, but now I'm bloated; jeez I need a break. It's been a tough year in many ways, but with a little luck I'll get to the end of it. With a little despair I won't go completely off the edge."

Mel Gibson speaks quietly, in a strange accent that veers constantly between American and Australian. And he laughs a lot. Having admitted to being extremely tired, he concedes that location work is a lot less trying than many other aspects of film-making . . . talking to the press, for example.

"You can never believe what people write about you, ever. They write whatever they want to, and they usually take greater licence when they haven't actually met you than when they have. One thing I won't do, though, is talk about my personal life, because whenever I do I usually end up saying something idiotic."

The very mention of the word "television" makes Gibson grimace. "I'm not doing chat shows again, ever. Interviewers are so predatory. They get you on there for the sole purpose of setting you up so they can knock you down. And the interviewer's holding all the cards on a show like that. He knows all the twists and turns, and suddenly he's leading you around corners, asking you stupid questions, making you look a fool — murdering you for his own ego. It's disgusting.

"What's worse, you can't even fight back. The guy is in front of a studio audience who are all his ardent fans, otherwise they wouldn't be there. If you try answering him back they hate you for it. He asks you an offensive question — deliberately offensive — and you want to say, *'Look, why don't you just fuck off?!'* But you can't! The audience would kill you. It's horrible."

So, no more chat shows. But there are lots of other traps and pitfalls awaiting a young and good-natured actor about to make it very big in Hollywood. How is he managing to deal with the pampering he's

ONE CHEMICAL *reaction*

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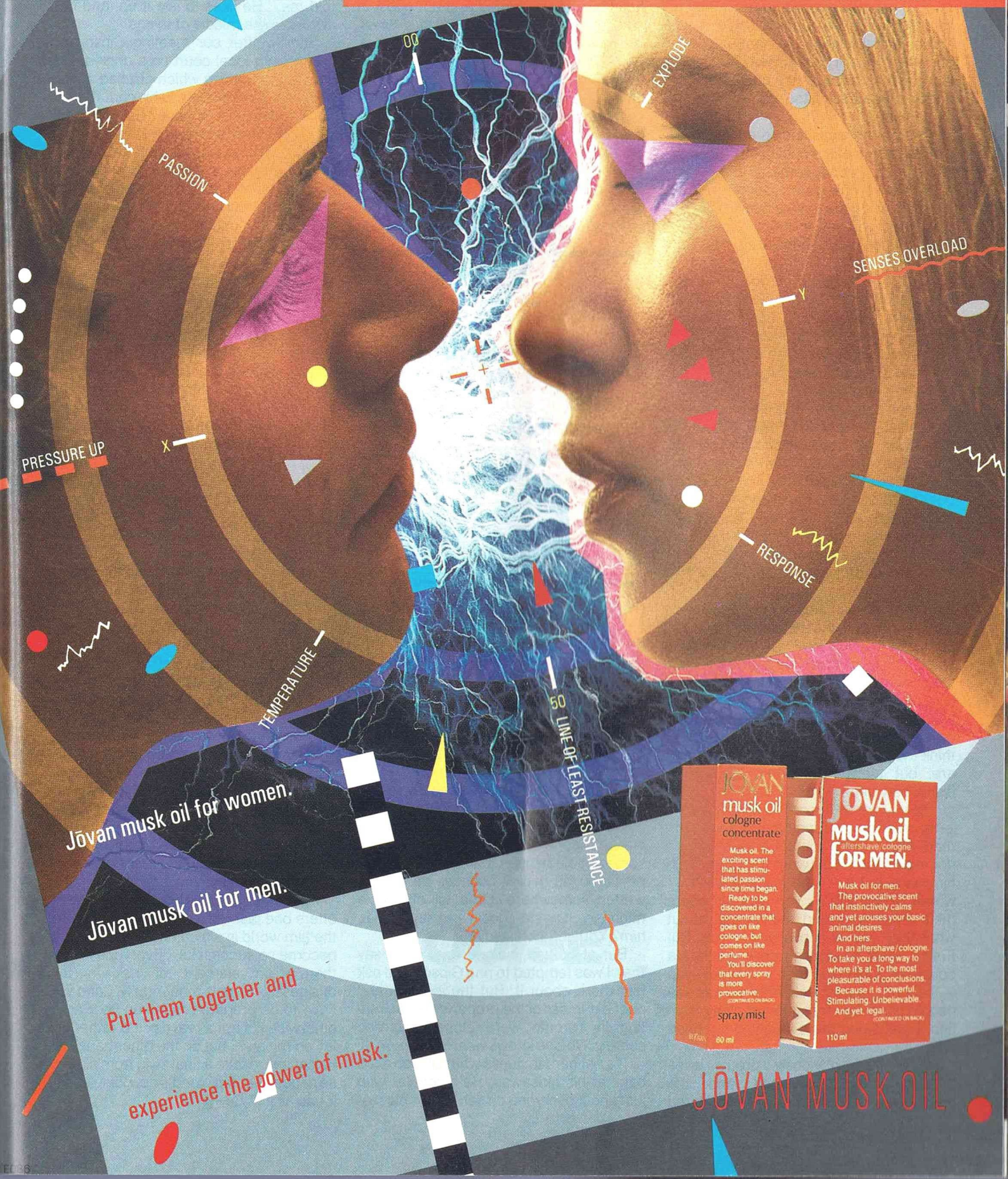

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now getting from the film world's ever-present lackeys?

"It's funny, really — a bit like being handled like an egg. Don't drop it! You get off a plane somewhere and all of a sudden someone is handing you a drink, sticking a chair under your butt, and telling you to relax. If you don't go along with it they resent it. And if you decide to be a real arsehole and make a big hoot and holler about it, they still do it anyway. So you go along with it, because it's good manners, and because it's just too much damn trouble to fight it."

There are occasional problems, too, with members of the public. "It can be difficult, yeah. People come up to you and say, 'You've changed . . . you're all different . . . it's gone to your head, blah blah blah.' And you say to them, 'How can I *avoid* it when people behave so differently towards me?'

"Two years ago I'd go down to buy a newspaper, and the guy would be in a bad mood that day so he'd let me have it: 'Haven't you got the right change, mate?' But nowadays, suddenly he's all nice. 'Can I get you a paper? Here, take two! No, no. You don't have to pay.' "

Gibson's laughing, but it's obviously a valid point. "What can I do? I can't refuse the paper, so I take it and say thanks. That's fine with me, but then someone else might look at me and say: 'Who the hell does he think *he* is?' People do start to act odd around you."

Gibson has also had to make the readjustment back to American society (he's still an American citizen), something which was possibly less difficult for him than for the other Australian film makers who've moved to the US to be closer to the centre of the industry. "They don't know what to make of Australians in Hollywood; they really don't. In America they're very sparing, very polite: they don't come up to you and call you a lot of four-letter words, or say something embarrassing. They think they're being kind, and in a way they are, but there's a certain amount of dishonesty about it.

"So you get someone like Fred Schepisi — a great guy, a funny guy, a real party man. And I guess you can't teach an old dog new tricks. So I went to a party with him once in LA — the industry town — where people are all very worried about their reputations and are careful about what they say in public and so on. But Fred's Fred; he doesn't care. He has a couple of drinks and then — yappety-yap — he's off; he's himself. And you can see people *shrinking*, trying to get away from him. I just stood there laughing my head off."

While he's obviously pretty level-headed about Hollywood and the mentality of its inhabitants, I wondered what Gibson felt about going back after so long. Did he actually *like* the place? "Hollywood?" he replied solemnly. "Hollywood's a great place . . . to stay away from."

Night-time in Toronto. There's a blizzard howling through the streets, the temperature is the lowest it's been for seven years, and the receptionist at my hotel has nearly fainted at the request to take a message if Mel Gibson phones. "Mel Gibson!" she keeps saying in awe. "Mel *Gibson* . . ."

The receptionist's reaction doesn't come as any surprise, because it's the same attitude you encounter from women the world over at the mention of Gibson's name. He has a very obvious natural sex appeal — finely chiselled features, blue eyes, and an athletic body — but the kind of adoration he generates is on another scale altogether. Even the seasoned unit publicist on *Mrs Soffel* drew attention to it. "It's extraordinary," she said. "I don't have a single woman friend who hasn't asked to meet him. And I'm talking about women who have met a *lot* of good-looking actors . . ."

> "Mel's not one of those guys who has to go home early and put his pretty face to bed," one technician told me. "He likes to live it up."

She couldn't explain this, and neither can I. Like Gibson himself, we just accepted it. "What can I say?" he'd lamented when the subject came up. "Calling me a sex symbol is about as much use as putting a label on a bottle of beer. It might make people buy the stuff, it might not. Someone might write that because some people happen to think it. Or a lot of people might think it because they see it written somewhere. Or a lot of people might see it written down and say, 'What, *him*? You gotta be kidding!' "

But of course, no-one ever *does* say that. I was tempted to ring Gibson and ask him more about it. But the location and phone number of the property he was renting in Toronto were closely guarded secrets. *No-one* knows where his house is.

It's not hard to guess what Gibson does back at his hideaway. He's popular with just about everyone on set, but his closest friends are all among the camera crew. Burly, down-to-earth men, they're intelligent without being intellectual. They don't give a fuck about the star system, and they like to have a good time. In a city like Toronto in mid-winter that means a lot of card games, a lot of talking shop and, of course, a lot of boozing. "Mel's not one of those guys who has to go home early and put his pretty face to bed," one technician told me. "He likes to live it up, and he's always in the middle of things."

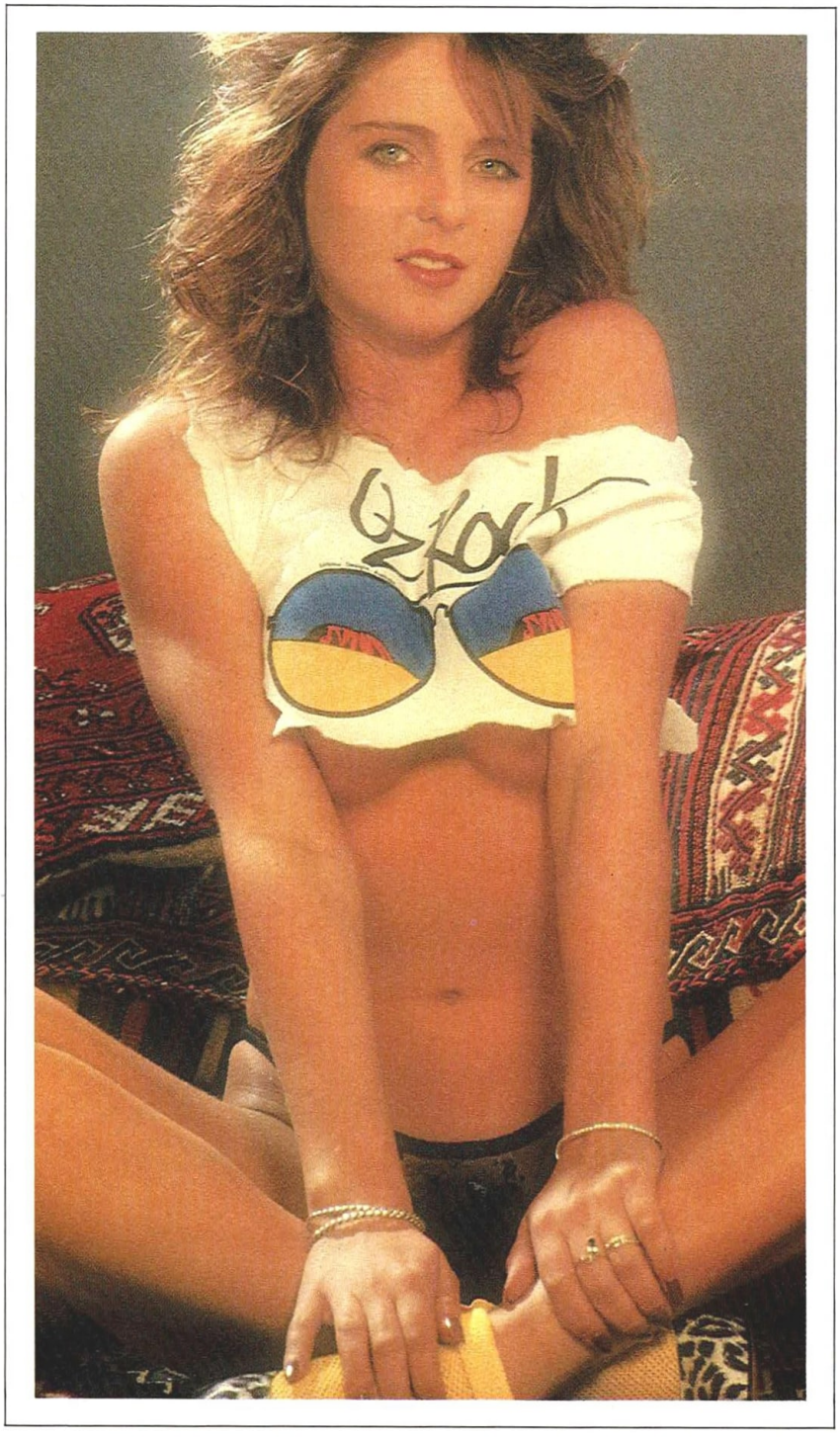
Shortly after our meeting Gibson appeared in a local court on a drink-driving charge, something which puzzled a lot of people. Why didn't he use his chauffeur, or get someone else to drive? But using your chauffeur means using the studio Cadillac — very conspicuous for a private night out with your mates in the city. And Gibson is not the kind of man to duck his turn at driving on the grounds that he's the "star" of the picture and thus can't afford the risk.

On the set itself there's no distinction made between actor and technician, director and driver. Gibson and Diane Keaton squeeze into the back of a half-track unit personnel carrier and, like everyone else in the vehicle, settle down to wait for the driver to return from a coffee break. Although the atmosphere is very relaxed, it's clear that Mel's career has reached the point where he now makes films with very large budgets indeed. This doesn't bother him unduly.

"If there's any pressure it's on the director," Gibson claims. "They have to deal more directly with the finance people and they're the ones who get the hassle if things aren't clipping along. But a little pressure isn't necessarily a bad thing. Sometimes you need a kick up the arse or you can get a bit indulgent. You know, 'Oh, I don't feel like it today.' That kind of stuff. And that's not what it's about. If you're getting paid the bucks you should be able to switch it on and have it all wired to go."

The missing driver reappears and the carrier heads off for the afternoon's location site. I suggest that Gibson might find it difficult returning to the real world after a year spent on different sets, but he disagrees. "No. I hope things continue as they were, and I think they will. They can be proud of something in Australia, and good on 'em, but they're not going to jump up and down and make idiots of themselves. No-one's going to meet me with a brass band or anything."

As the vehicle pulls into the site, Gibson offers one last reflection on the nature of the film world in which he seems about to become so successful. "Everyone knows there's an element of risk in this business," he says thoughtfully, "and you have to be prepared to fall on your arse, otherwise it's not a real risk. I'd rather not fall on my arse, but on the other hand" — he pauses to take a final swig from his bottle of beer — "the world's not going to end if I do, is it?"

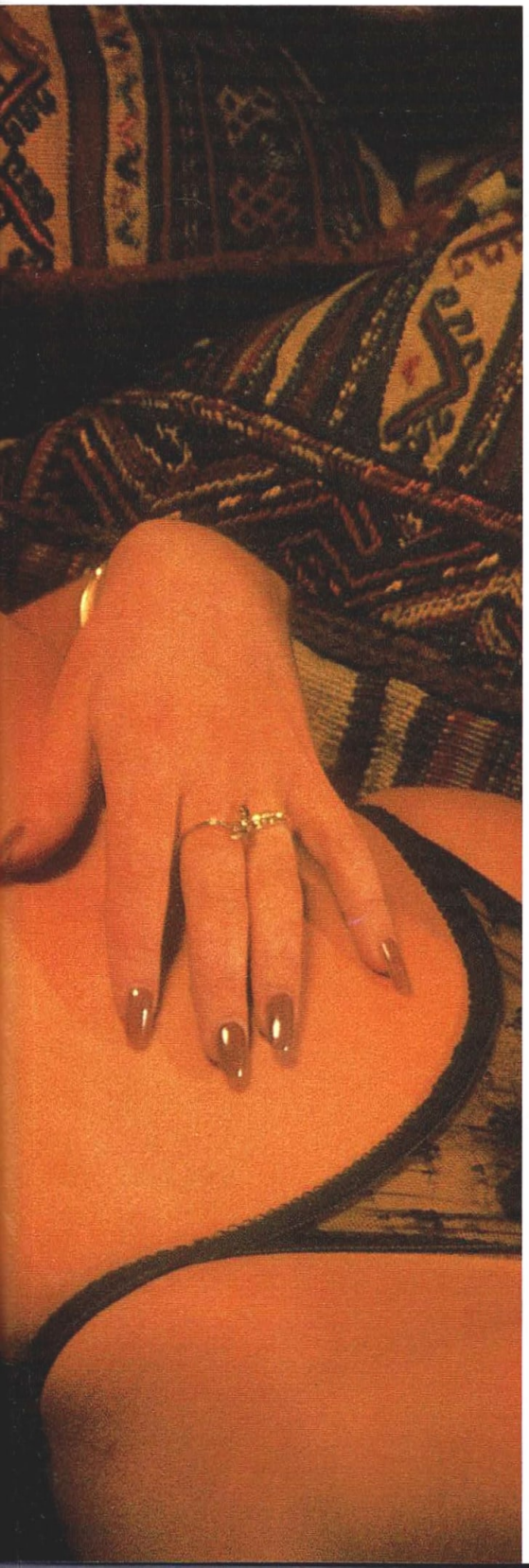


LOUISE

"You're only young once," says petite Pet Of The Month Louise Shires. "You have to grasp the moment." Louise, 19, wastes no opportunity to get amongst it and sample new experiences. Most of all she loves to dance. In that regard she tends to mix business with pleasure, for as a professional dancer her working week is not so much of a grind as a bump and grind.

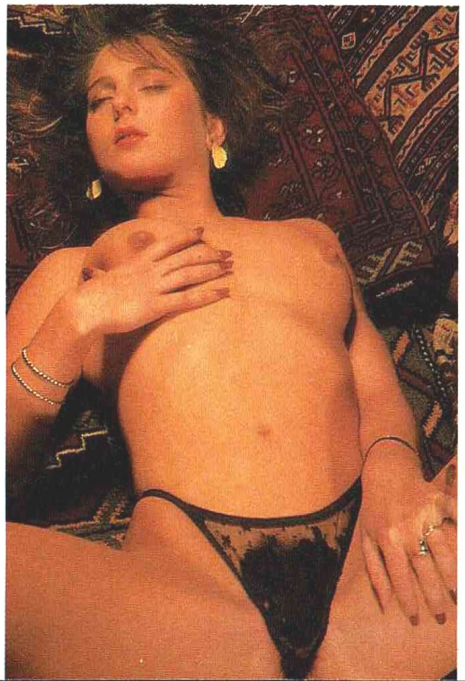
FLASHDANCE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS DICKSON

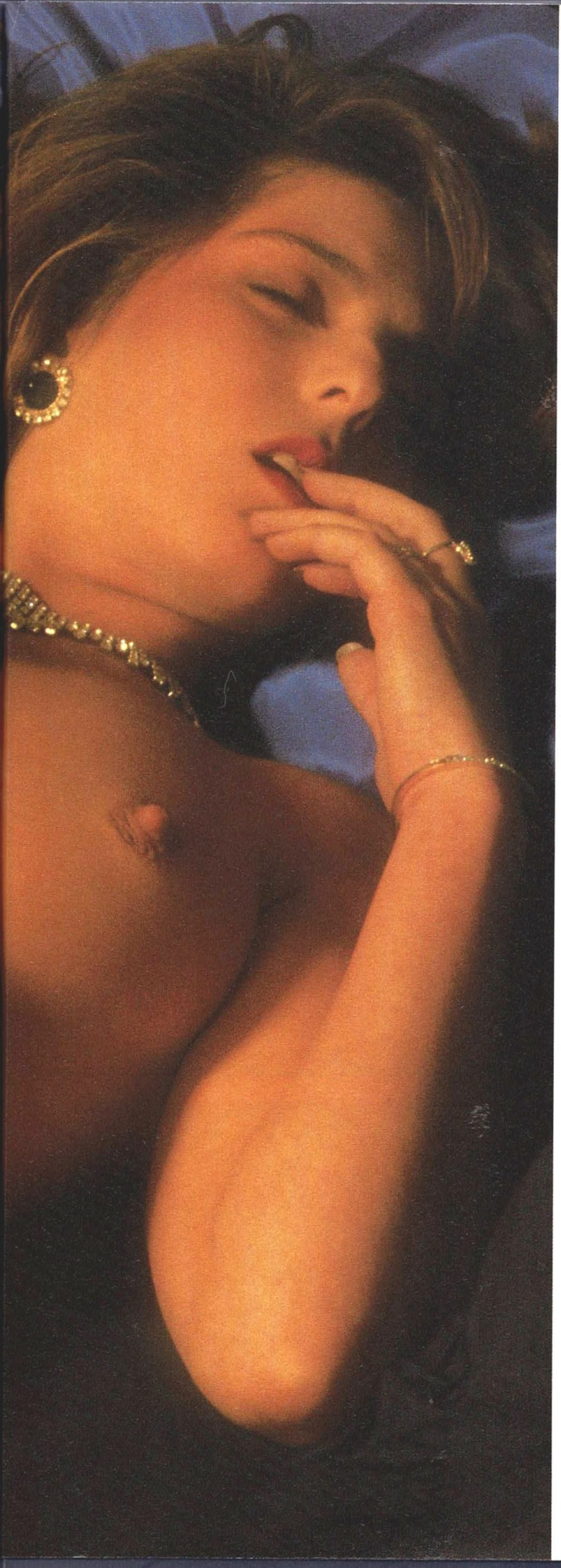


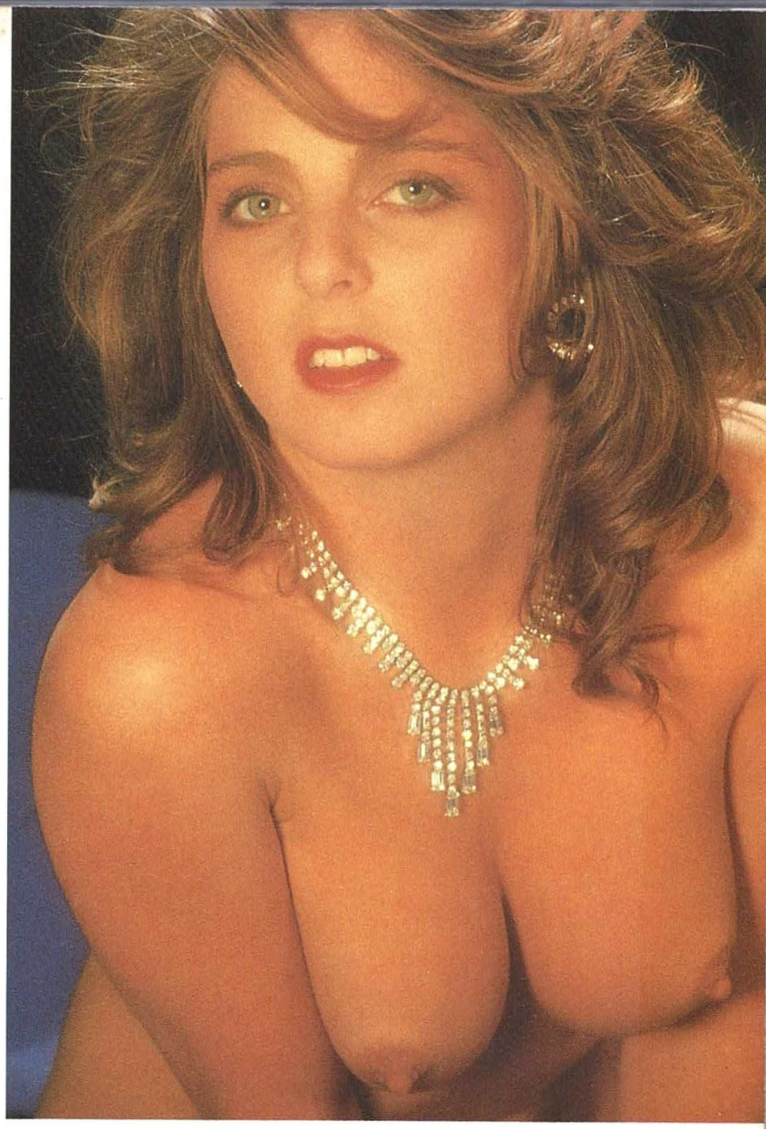
Louise hails from Toowoomba and she grew up in a number of Sunshine State cities before moving south to Sydney. She's currently dancing overtime there to get enough travel funds together for a trip to Canada. She travelled through Europe with her parents a few years ago and since then she's been keen to get off on her own.

Some people collect postage stamps; Louise's passions run to items that are not much larger than stamps, and which would bring any philatelist's watermark to boiling point. She collects silk, satin and lace knickers and nightwear and since she was about 13 she's gathered together a glory box of frilly thrillers, that's, well, simply glorious.



Louise is quite up front about her undercover collection. She's a little more coy about admitting that she's hooked on TV's *Perfect Match*. She says she never really knew she had a sadistic streak until she started looking forward to that show every weekday afternoon.





The needle on her compatibility meter points straight up for a man who can make his own decisions. That's the type of fellow who'll help her live out her favorite fantasy of making love in a cable car over the Swiss Alps. Unusual? "Not at all," says Louise. "Most girls like an occasional lift in their sex lives."

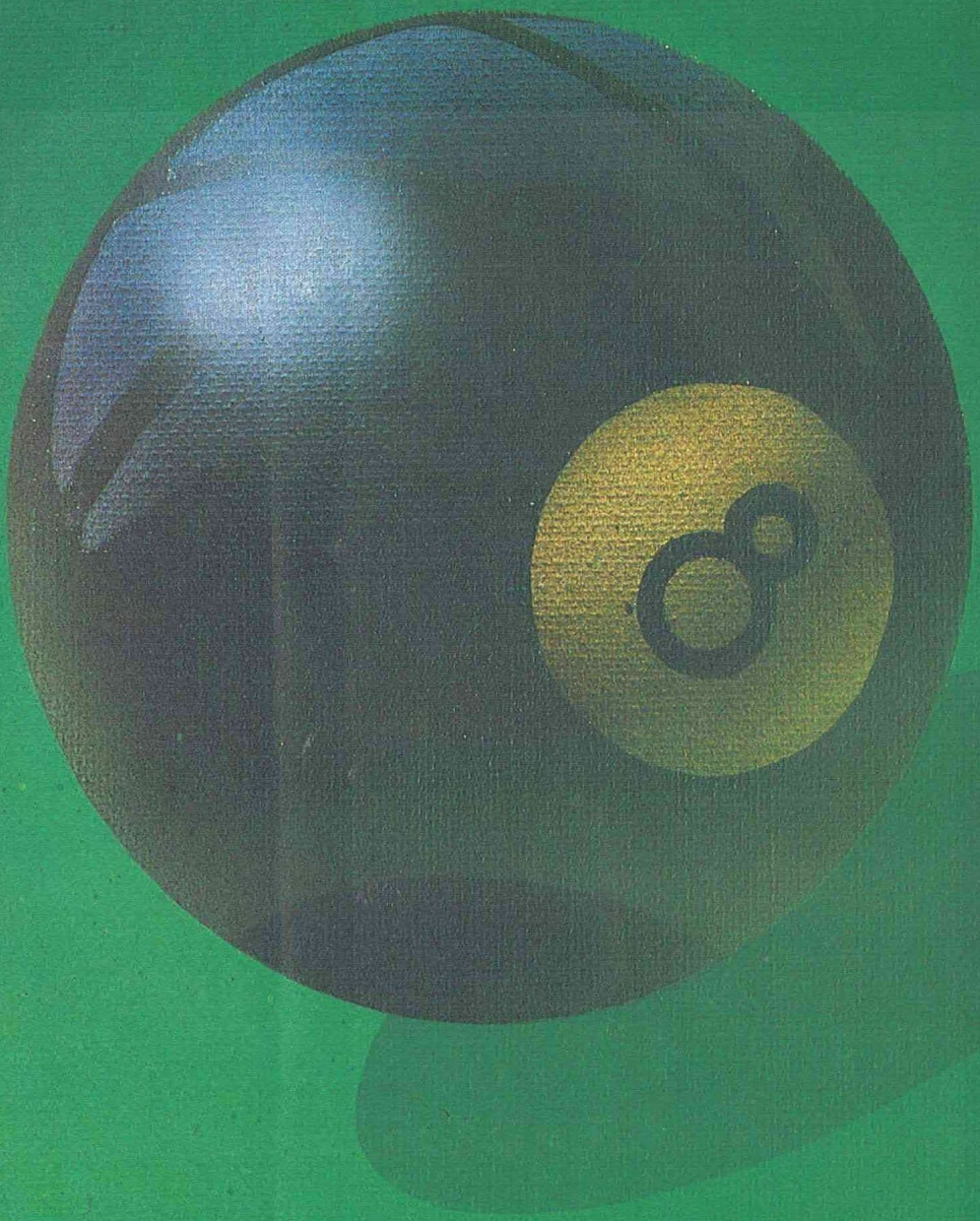
MISS LOUISE SHIRES/PENTHOUSE PET OF THE MONTH

How to win — and survive — in the pub pool arena

DIRTY POOL

BY GREG HUNTER

Pool is not a game for wimps. The chances are good that in any group of half a dozen Australian men, one will have been hit over the head with a pool cue at some time in his life; another will have hit somebody else over the head with a pool cue; and at least two others will have a close associate who has done either or both of the above. It is therefore possible to argue that the game of pool, as played in this country, is actually a violent contact sport. With the possible exceptions of the Hill at the SCG on Grand Final Day, and Bay 13 at the MCG on any day, more fights take place over pool tables than in any other area of Australian social life.



Pool is also reckoned to be the most popular participant sport in Australia, although no-one knows for sure, because there's no national governing body and very few associations. The game is played mostly in pubs by people who share a fascination for the art of poking a stick at a ball, but aren't into setting up a whole mess of official competitions and regulations to govern their own actions. So in the pub pool environment it's a case of every man for himself.

When you step into the local to shoot a couple of frames with your mates, the primary objective is to

ILLUSTRATION BY PETER MELDRUM

DIRTY POOL

have a good time. But because of the intricate and volatile nature of pub pool, having a good time means fulfilling two major conditions: you have to survive, and you have to win. The purpose of this article is to explain precisely how the average player can accomplish both of these difficult objectives.

1. SURVIVAL

The name of the survival game is to give yourself every chance of blowing your opponent out of the water while at the same time avoiding, where possible, any contact between the base of your skull and the majestic arc of a pool cue swung in anger. I feel pretty well qualified to speak on this subject, having paid the penalty in various watering holes around the country for failure to observe the unwritten laws of the game. These experiences have led me to conduct a detailed study of the complex etiquette of pub pool. If you follow these rules closely, there's no reason why you can't expect to enter a den of iniquity, win a few free beers and a bit of pocketmoney, and emerge in one piece.

Inexperienced players can get into hot water before they've even picked up a cue. One of the major causes of pool violence is failure to observe the law relating to getting on a table in the first place. At most pubs, the "champion's table" system applies. This means that you cannot walk into the joint and expect to take on one of your mates immediately. The winner of the last game has the exclusive right to dictate what goes on in the following game. He *owns* that table. If he wants to play singles, you play singles; if he wants to play doubles, you play doubles. You have to earn the right to dictate terms by winning the table from him — and if you lose, you spend the next two hours scratching your arse and waiting for another turn. This, of course, is why winning is so essential to having a good time. But more of that later.

Now, in the days of pub pool's infancy, the order of players to challenge the champ was determined solely by the bravado of the contenders. Publicans who got sick of mopping up after walrus-like displays of male dominance instituted a system whereby challengers have to place their 20-cent coins on the table in order of their arrival. This area is fraught with potential dangers and always accompanied by a palpable whiff of tension. The first move is to look for the table with the fewest coins, then find out how many people are sweating on them. With any luck, half of those coins will belong to people who are already retching in the toilets or passing out on the floor, which means you can slip in front of them on the queue. But never put your two bob down until you have established where the line-up starts. And don't try putting more than one coin on the same table in the hope of buying some bargaining power, unless your cranium is thicker than Skull Murphy's. Multiple coins are regarded as an outrage, and if anyone else is pulling this trick, you can assume that *his* cranium is thicker than Skull Murphy's and that he is dimly aware of that fact. Better to look elsewhere. You can, however, stake your claim on separate tables, as long as you don't end up playing two games simultaneously. Nothing gives pool players the shits more thoroughly than that. And remember that the price of a game of pool is eternal vigilance. If you don't stand guard over your own coin, some drunken fart will always come along and claim it was his.

The limitations of the coin system are obvious, which is why some concerned publicans have erected blackboards on which players must write their initials to indicate the order. Always look for the blackboard as soon as you arrive. Nobody will point it out to you, which means you can end up idiotically standing guard over your two bob when everyone else in the place knows it is completely irrelevant. The locals love it when that happens. And neither is the blackboard system foolproof. The worst case of pool violence I ever saw happened in the Hoey-Moey in Coffs Harbor (NSW) one Christmas, when two players finished up wiping the floor with each other after both claimed they'd chalked their names up first. It turned out they had the same initials.

> Stand directly behind the pocket into which your opponent is aiming, and *wear a green jumper.* This will really screw up his line of vision

Assuming you have negotiated this minefield successfuly, you're now in a position to challenge for the table. Before you make another move, you must discuss "pub rules" with your opponent. Normally the rules of "Eight Ball" (which is the correct name of the game) will be plastered on the wall somewhere in a hopeless attempt by the publican to obviate arguments. Those rules will have been studiously ignored for the past decade by the locals, who for some reason are invariably compelled to introduce their own bastardised versions of the game. These parochial variations exist in practically every pub across the land, and they are incontrovertible. I recall a case in point which took place in a low-rent brothel of a pub somewhere in the wilderness of central Queensland. I put 50 bucks on a game of pool, and just before the break, my opponent pointed to the left hand corner pocket and said: "I'm gonna sink the black ball in that hole." I assumed this was a pathetic attempt to psych me out of the game. I potted all my balls, then sank the black. However, as it turned out I lost the game because I had failed to adhere to the pub rules, which stated that you had to nominate which pocket you'd sink the black ball in *before* the commencement of the game. The fucker had neglected to inform me of this quaint local custom because I hadn't bothered to ask about pub rules. I'm still whingeing about that one to anybody who'll listen.

You will invariably encounter problems in your effort to establish the rules, because your opponent will normally be either too sneaky, too stupid or too drunk to tell you everything you need to know before the doubtful situations arise. He will simply say: "Pub rules, mate," and will get the shits if you interrupt his drinking time by trying to make him elaborate. The best move is to find out as much as you can beforehand by grilling anybody who looks like he's been nailed to his bar stool for the past year. Chances are he'll know of any bizarre local variations, and you'll only have to confirm them with your opponent later, bearing in mind that he's the champ and is therefore running the show. Don't push your luck. Be content if you can establish: (a) whether a foul shot means a two-stroke penalty, or whether the rule is "play your own ball" (there are several silly alternatives, but those are the main ones); (b) whether or not you can shoot backwards from the "D" when your opponent has pocketed the cue ball; (c) precisely when a foul shot on the black ball constitutes loss of game.

These questions carry enormous tactical importance. To start with, if the local rule is "play your own ball" the suggestion is that all players are honest and will endeavor to hit their own balls at all times, even though failure to do so does not constitute a two-shot penalty. This interpretation is otherwise known as "gentlemen's rules", and would be fine if the game was always played by gentlemen, which is patently not the case. When your opponent starts losing, he'll probably hit any goddamn ball he likes. Be prepared to accept this as a fact of life, and never, ever bet on the outcome of a "gentlemen's" game of pool. Secondly, if the rule is that you can't shoot backwards from the "D", your opponent can snooker you if your balls are behind the baulk line by going "in off" on purpose, and may even be able to win the game in this lowdown fashion if

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When only the best will do.

DIRTY POOL

you're on the black ball and it is lying behind the baulk line and any foul on black means loss of game. That's where the third question comes in. In some pubs, any failure to hit the black ball, no matter how many of your opponent's balls remain on the table, automatically forfeits the game. This means your opponent could win the game by failing to pot any of his balls, in which case he could easily snooker you on the black with both eyes shut. Obviously this is a stupid way to play pool, but if it is the pub rule, you will never succeed in convincing the locals of that, so don't risk your neck trying.

Finally, the ultimate arbiters on pub rules are the mob of entrenched drinkers at the bar. They will hand down their decisions during the game when the occasion arises, and you have no choice but to accept them.

Your next task is to find a decent cue. This is a tough one, because if there were ever any decent cues around, someone would have ripped them off by now. The best you can hope for is one that is reasonably straight, has a round rather than flat tip (important for cue ball control) and doesn't have a strange rattle when you shake it. You have waited until now to select your cue because the best way to determine its straightness is to roll it along the table and see whether it wiggles up and down like a battery-powered dildo.

Before the game starts, poke the cue ball into the cushions and along the length of the table a few centimetres in from both sides. This will give you an idea of: (1) the speed of the table; (2) whether the cushions are rooted, which means they will spray the balls at ridiculous angles; (3) whether the table has all kinds of rolls which will make you look like you can play curve shots without even trying. If that's the case, there is no point in playing soft. You will have to drive every ball as if you're playing a three-iron, and you can only do that if the pockets will handle it. On some inferior tables the pockets are nothing but holes drilled into the surface which are fractionally bigger than the balls. If you whack the balls into them, they'll "bubble" in the pocket and jump back out. Also, the shape of the "nail" (the end of the cushion leading into the pocket) can vary. A straight nail pocket will take a hard shot better than a curved nail pocket. The only way to determine whether or not you can play with speed is to belt the cue ball into the holes and see what happens.

Having now stretched your opponent's patience to the limit, you'd better observe the etiquette concerning the break. At some pubs, the challenger always sets up the balls and then a coin is tossed, with the winner deciding who breaks. More often, though, the rule is that a coin is tossed first and the winner decides whether to set the balls or break them. Either way, if you win the toss it's better to make the other guy break, even if this means foregoing the psychological advantage of having him on his hands and knees racking up the balls. The reasoning here is that if you cut the balls dead centre at full power, the odds are (according to some researcher who once did it thousands of times) that you'll only have a 50 percent chance of sinking a ball. Even if you do fluke one in, the odds are again only 50 percent that the ball you've potted will be one from the favored group, ie the balls in the best position on the table. Therefore the real odds of coming out of the break in better shape than your opponent are three to one against. It follows that if you lose the toss and have to break, it's best to play safe by clipping the edge of the pack and running the cue ball back to the bottom of the table. Technically, you're supposed to cut the pack hard enough to make two balls reach the cushions, but your opponent is unlikely to know that. He'll probably think you're a wimp, but will rarely be incited to violence. If you're setting the balls rather than breaking, you're supposed to put the black in the middle and arrange the others in alternate order throughout. Failure to do this will label you a turkey.

Now that the game has finally started, you're in the home stretch. There are relatively few hazards to avoid at this

BEHIND THE 8-BALL

The game of billiards, from which pool is derived, was for centuries confined to the elite classes. Mary Queen of Scots complained that her billiard table was taken away during her imprisonment; James I of England was a champion player; Mozart found that poking a stick inspired his compositions; Napoleon whittled away his hours of exile on St Helena by potting billiard balls; Queen Victoria had a table erected at Windsor Castle in 1838; and King George V competed in a World Snooker Championship (snooker, apparently invented in 1875 by British officers stationed in India, quickly spread to England.)

Typically, the Americans didn't waste time importing billiards (George Washington was a devotee) and introducing their own versions of the game, beginning with "American Four Ball" and eventually leading to 22 different "pool" games all played with 15 balls on a table three-quarters the size of a championship billiard table. Eight Ball, the game played in pubs throughout Australia, is one of these variations, and was probably first played in the US about 100 years ago. However, the first game to be called "pool" originated in England and derived its name from the pool of money staked by the players, whose task was to pot all their opponents' balls while their own remained on the table. The winner took away the pool. (This game was the forerunner of Kelly Pool, a popular gambling game played in Australian billiard halls especially in the Thirties.) Whether the Americans developed Eight Ball from this game or as a derivation of Four Ball is unclear, but it was certainly they who made the various pool games popular worldwide. While the former British Empire countries are the only places where snooker and billiards are major games, pool is played on an enormous scale practically everywhere else — including the USSR, where its popularity is booming.

As a British colonial outpost, Australia was until recently a billiards and snooker stronghold. The game of pool was probaby imported on a small scale by American whalers in the early 1900s, but it didn't take off until after World War II, when Australians started to pick up an American appetite for cheap amusements: pinballs, jukeboxes and such. When club membership became available to the masses in the Sixties, publicans found the only way they could attract drinkers was to provide amusements, and so the pub pool table became a standard fixture throughout the country. Because of the need to make things a bit difficult for billiard ball thieves, they had to opt for coin-operated tables, and the game which best suited that requirement was Eight Ball. Of the 22 different games played in pool halls in the US, Eight Ball is only a minor variant; when you watched Minnesota Fats lumbering around the table in the classic movie *The Hustler*, he was playing 14.1 Pocket Billiards or "Straight Pool" — a much more difficult game than Eight Ball, and one which Australian Snooker Champion Eddie Charlton describes as "the greatest of all the games played on a billiard table — including snooker."

Although there are no figures available, Charlton reckons that in the last 15 years pool has become the most popular participant sport in Australia. The game seems to carry a universal fascination, and there are no restrictions on the grounds of age, fitness and sex (now that the tables have been moved from public bars into mixed lounges in most pubs). But because pool has been traditionally confined to male domains like the billiard hall and the public bar, women are still regarded in most areas as freaks if they know how to handle a pool cue. The ability to swagger around a pool table with an air of confident indif-

stage, with the exception of one very touchy area: the unprofessional foul. The rules state that if a player "interferes" with the balls by touching them with his cue, body or clothing, he is deemed to have played a foul stroke and must concede a two-shot penalty. If your opponent is very pissed, chances are he will commit all of these *faux pas* practically every time he tries to poke at a ball. He may even dribble all over the cloth, throw up in one of the pockets or, in the extreme case, fall asleep on the table while attempting a stroke requiring a long stretch. (The latter is actually more common when you're playing with heroin users, who are always nodding off at critical times in pool games.) But whatever happens, pub etiquette decrees that you do *not* try to enforce the rules relating to unprofessional fouls. If you ignore this one, you're really looking for trouble.

Assuming that you've come this far without being forced to wear your opponent's cue, maybe it's time to start pushing your luck a little. Remember, you have got to blow the bastard off the table, or it's back to the end of the line. If you're falling behind in the game and you've sensed that your opponent is not a dangerous psychopath, there are several forms of gamesmanship that you might consider using. I know a bloke who used to hitch around the country a lot and pay his way by winning the odd game of pool. As a small-time hustler he wasn't a bad player, but when the chips were down he would employ any of the following techniques:

(1) When your opponent is lining up a shot, start making idle conversation just at the critical moment when he is about to follow through with his cue. You only need to do this once during the whole game, because he will always be waiting for you to do it again.

(2) Alternatively, stand directly behind the pocket into which your opponent is aiming the ball, and *wear a green jumper*. This will really screw up his line of vision.

(3) When your opponent is lining up a simple poke, express doubt over his ability to make the shot: "Fuck that's a tough shot you're trying there." When he's attempting a really difficult stroke, the reverse applies.

(4) Halfway through the game, when he is clearly ahead and playing much better than you, suggest raising the stakes. This is obviously a risky move, but it will suggest to him that you're actually a brilliant player who's been hustling all along, and that you are about to wipe him off the board. His subsequent nervousness may be your only chance.

(5) Even if you are playing like an old moll, spend as much time as you can at the table by pretending to consider deeply the consequences of every shot. Your objective here is twofold: (a) you are trying to give your opponent the impression that you are dominating the table, even though you are not; (b) you are trying to break up his rhythm.

(6) The last point is crucial. You will have noticed that doubles play rarely produces the same degree of finesse as singles play, and this is because none of the players gets a chance to settle into the groove. Therefore, if your opponent is running hot and you can't keep him from dominating the table, halt the game by going to the bar and buying your drinks. Alternatively, if your glass is full, get him to hang on while you go for a leak. Finally, if you sense that nothing will stop him, accidently throw a full glass all over the table, thus ending the game with a stalemate.

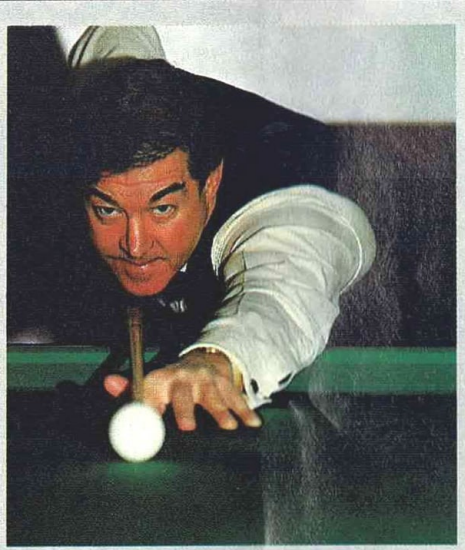
It need hardly be said that such gambits can only be employed against timid opponents. Gamesmanship on your part may be limited, but your opponent's idea of gamesmanship may be to stuff the butt end of a cue up your nose. It's worthwhile noting that the abovementioned small-time hustler earned the nickname "Canvasback" because he was always being decked during pool games in pubs.

A final word on survival. Pub pool is a game which by nature is normally played between strangers, and is thus often used as a social icebreaker. This makes it the perfect vehicle for narcotics officers to infiltrate the local pub drug scene. It is not at all rare for a person to get busted because he happened to say the wrong thing while

ference is still viewed as the essence of machismo and the most obvious evidence of a misspent youth.

Billiards and snooker have always suffered from a strangely dualistic image: originally the sport of the aristocracy, then the privilege of anyone who had the money to install a table, and at the same time the favored pastime of Runyonesque characters who scratched up pocketmoney hustling their way around smoke-filled billiard halls. Apart from sex, no other activity cuts across the social strata to such a great extent. Snooker has now scaled the heights of respectability through sponsorship and TV coverage, but in Australia and the US, pool remains the sport of would-be kings who didn't quite make it. That fact probably has a lot to do with pool's failure to evolve into a properly organised sport. Even in America the game lacks organisation and dozens of individuals simultaneously claim the title of "World Pool Champion." In Australia the situation is no different; associations are sporadically formed by inspired zealots who occasionally manage to bring off an inter-pub competition or two, but their hopes are always dashed in the end. Maybe pub pool players are worried that the game's mystique will be lost in the transition to standardised rules, competitions, membership fees and petty officials.

Eddie Charlton is the only Australian who has the prestige and charisma to



change all that — and he's doing so at the moment. Eddie is the only top-line snooker player who has broken away from that sport's elitist attitude toward pool and become a regular player, often touring Japan and the US to play "Straight Pool" against the world's best. The irony of pool's lack of organisation despite its immense popularity has not been lost on Charlton, and nor has the marketing potential of an Australian Pool Championship. Already he's organised state championships in association with various breweries in Western Australia and Queensland, and promoted Australian tours by two American "World Pool Champions" and a Japanese champion. "The game has a tremendous future in Australia," says Charlton, "but I don't see it ever becoming a nationally recognised sport while it's played as Eight Ball on coin-operated tables in pubs. I've drawn crowds of 800 and more to exhibition games in hotels — but those people have only come to see me rather than the game itself. It's not attractive enough on a half-sized pub table. When I finally organise the first Australian Pool Championship, it will have to be on a four-and-a-half foot by nine-foot championship pool table, and the game will have to be Straight Pool. I could put the whole thing together in one month, and I will as soon as I can find the time. I know exactly how to go about it. The championship could be run entirely in the lounges of hotels. You only have to install the table, the tiered seating, the light-shade, the carpet walkaround, the scoreboard — and you're in business. I've got all that stuff now."

Charlton sees his inaugural Australian Championship as a major step in the transformation of pool's image. "The set-up I'm working on would attract big crowds, sponsorship — the lot. Eventually television will change the image of the game, just as it did with snooker. When you consider that in most countries where it's shown *Pot Black* is the highest-rating sports show on TV, I don't see how we could lose by backing pool."

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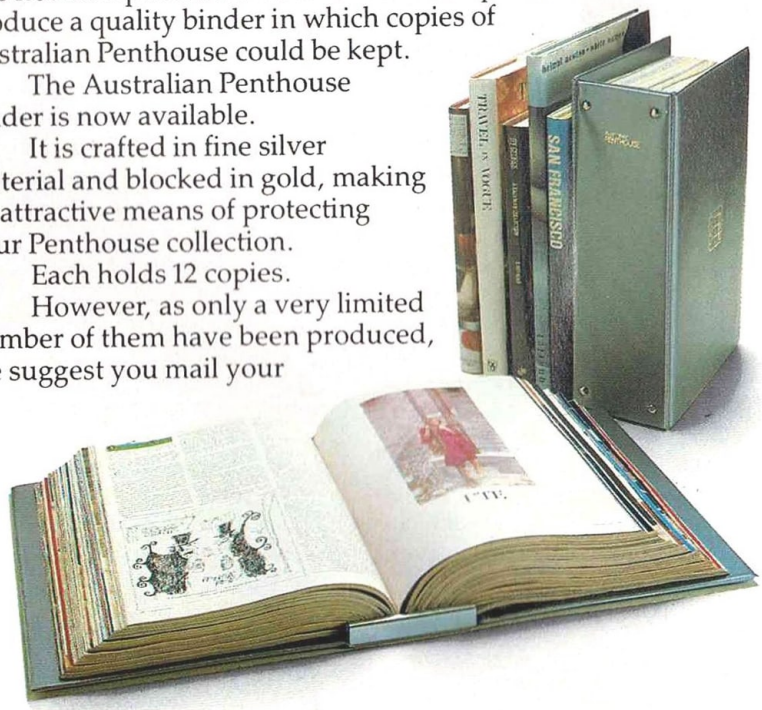

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2. WINNING

Now, if you have followed the above recommendations, you should have accomplished the objective of *creating the conditions* whereby it is possible for you to win the table. But if you want to make sure of winning that table, and of keeping it for as long as you like by consistently beating your opponents, then you will have to become a better player. That means mastering both the technique and the tactics of the game of pool. This is where you'll have to get serious.

A. TECHNIQUE

I'm not qualified to speak on the subject of technique, but Eddie Charlton is. "Steadie Eddie" is the only top-flight snooker professional in the world who regularly plays pool. Although there is no official Australian Pool Champion, nobody doubts that Eddie would win that title with one hand tied behind his back. When he plays exhibition games in pubs around Australia, Charlton normally breaks and then lets his opponent pocket any three balls he chooses before proceeding to shoot. Even under these conditions, Eddie hardly ever loses.

In terms of technique, says Charlton, there is no difference whatsoever between snooker and pool, except that pool usually requires the player to use the same strokes with a softer touch. So if you want an exhaustive illustrated guide to the techniques involved in wielding a pool cue, there is no better manual than the newly released *Complete Book Of Snooker* (MacMillan $14.95) by Eddie Charlton. Here's how the maestro summarised his views on the subject for *Penthouse:*

(ii) Stance: "When you line up a shot your cue tip should be 13mm (½ inch) from the cue ball; the cue should be as near as possible to horizontal; body balance should be forward, because most shots require a 'follow-through'; the bridge arm should be as straight as possible; the head must be right down, chinning the cue; the cue arm should drop vertically from the elbow; the left knee should be bent (assuming you're right-handed), and the right leg perfectly straight."

(iii) Aim: "Sighting along the length of a cue is the same as sighting with a rifle. It is vital that your chin is right down on the cue so that you're looking along the line of fire and getting a bead on the target, which is the object ball — that is, the ball you're going to pot. So at the precise moment before you play the shot, you're looking not at the point where you're going to hit the cue ball, but at the object ball. Looking at the cue ball is like looking at the trigger on a rifle instead of at the target. And you only aim down the length of the cue with your right eye, if you are right-handed, and conversely if you're left-handed. The eyes are too far apart to allow you to aim with both. When the time comes to squeeze the trigger, stop and consider three questions: (a) Am I hitting the object ball in the right place? (b) Am I hitting the cue ball on the area that I intend to? (c) Am I about to hit the cue ball at the right speed?"

(iv) Cueing: "I would say that if I had a machine to fire the cue ball for me, I would pot every ball I aimed at. Cueing, however, will always be the art of the game. In your preliminary cueing movements, you should be aware of your cue finishing its forward stroke half an inch back from the cue ball. If you intend to play a soft stroke, the distance from your bridge hand to the cue ball should be shorter than normal, and thus you must move forward the gripping point on the butt of the cue so that when the cue tip is half an inch from the cue ball, the forearm, wrist and fist drop vertically from the elbow. The converse applies if you are playing a power shot. Now, commence your back and forth cueing steadily; the only moving parts of your whole body should be your eyes (moving slowly back and forth from the cue ball to the object ball, finally resting on the object ball just prior to impact) and your cue arm. There must be no wrist action, and no movement of the cue arm shoulder at all. The cue arm swings from the elbow only. Finally, the best advice ever extended to me during my career came from the great Joe Davis, who suggested a slight pause just prior to proceeding with the stroke. The pause allows me to gather all my thoughts, steady myself, and actually rally strength before playing the shot."

> Applying spin to gain position is the most satisfying aspect of any billiard game

(v) Bridging: Most pool players come to grief when they have to play the cue ball directly off and away from the cushion. "The average player in this position raises his bridge hand off the cushion rail so that only the fingertips are touching, then addresses the ball with the cue hand raised, thus making a downward thrust at the cue ball. *This is very wrong.* To play the shot correctly, place your bridge hand fingers on the outside edge of the cushion rail, with the little finger off the cushion. Now with your bridge arm stretched horizontal and straight, and with your bridge hand clamped to the cushion rail, you can slide the cue back and forth with confidence. Your stance is normal and your chin is resting on the cue for correct sighting. The backward action of the cue is *slow* and *short.* The tip of the cue just brushes the edge of the cushion cloth before striking the ball."

(vi) Potting: "If you're going to have any chance of becoming a really good player, you must practise potting until you reach the point where the pocketing of the object ball takes up only 10 percent of your concentration, with the remaining 90 percent focused on the positioning of the cue ball. Only then can you go on to advanced techniques of cue ball control."

(vii) Advanced Cue Ball Control: Until you have mastered the techniques of spinning the cue ball, you will never be able to string together pot after pot. Applying spin to gain position is the most satisfying aspect of any billiard game. Eddie Charlton uses a clockface system to explain the spinning technique: "If you strike the cue ball at 12 o'clock on its face, with a smooth, controlled follow-through, you will impart *topspin,* causing the ball to run on after it has hit the object ball. Conversely, if you strike at six o'clock, again with a smooth follow-through, you impart backspin (*screw*) to the cue ball, pulling it back towards you. For a *stun* shot (halting the cue ball at the point where it hits the object ball with full contact), you strike the cue ball halfway between six o'clock and dead centre. The same point of contact is used in the angled stun shot to take the ball across the table when the object ball is hit at an angle. The stun and screw strokes make up at least 90 percent of my game. I can usually use them to gain any desired position."

To understand how this is possible, look at the diagram overleaf, adapted from the *Complete Book Of Snooker.* The white lines (a), (b) and (c) indicate three possible desired paths for the cue ball away from the object ball, all of which can be achieved by varying the striking point on the cue ball and the speed of the stroke. The striking point for path (a) is halfway between six o'clock and dead centre (stun shot); for path (b) it is six o'clock (screw shot); and for path (c) it is again six o'clock. The reason for the change of direction between (b) and (c) is also the reason for the extra travel of (c). The shot for path (c) is played with extra power, causing the ball to screw back more sharply.

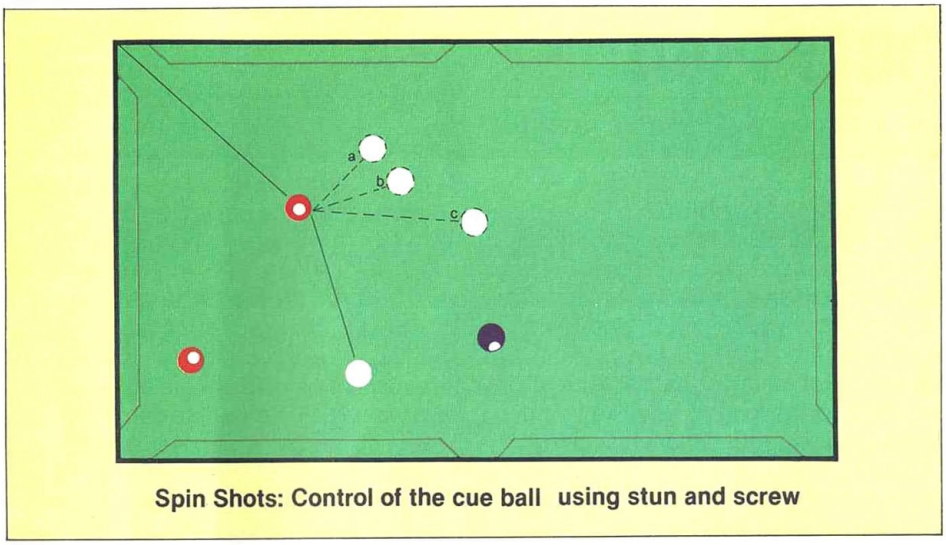
"When you are making stun and screw shots you're striking the cue ball below centre and applying reverse spin. Even though the cue ball is going forward it is rotating backwards, so when it hits the object ball its momentum is halted, the spin

DIRTY POOL

gets hold of the nap (fibre) of the cloth and the ball comes back. To apply the spin effectively, certain conditions are necessary, the most important being a *firm, rounded cue tip adequately chalked*. When I'm playing stun and screw shots, I shorten the normal 10-inch bridge down to about eight inches. I then get a firmer grip of the cloth with my bridge hand fingers and a firmer grip of the cue butt so as to feel the 'grip of the tip' through to the cue ball. To play the stun and screw shots correctly the bridge hand must be lowered; the next step is to lower the cue hand, so that the whole cue is down and horizontally level. Don't play a downward stroke into the cue ball — you have to hit straight into the ball. For the screw shot tighten your grip of the cue on impact, and follow through for a distance of three inches. This applies the 'bite' which creates the spin. For the stun shot, follow exactly the same procedure, except that you have to stop your cue arm on impact."

With all of the shots described above — topspin, stun and screw — the cue ball is being struck at different points *along its vertical centre axis*. It is possible to strike the cue ball at an infinite number of points on the clockface which are off the centre axis, thus imparting *sidespin* to the ball. Eddie's views on this subject are strong: "I always play along the centre axis where possible, and I advise anyone who wants to learn a spin game to do the same. I've used that technique most of my career, because you can get any position you want by using topspin, stun and screw in combination with the cushions — provided you've made the right angle for the shot. People who use side when it's unnecessary are crazy, because when you hit the ball on its side you're moving if off its line on the way to the object ball, and its path is affected by all sorts of things — the texture and slackness of the cloth, the direction of the nap, the extent of side imparted, the weather, and so on. Unless you have a profound knowledge of all those factors, it's suicide."

If you're a beginner, following Charlton's instructions on basic techniques will improve your game significantly. If you're an average sort of player whose potting is accurate, there is no reason why you can't apply the instructions on cue ball control and start adding another dimension to your game. There is no magic in the ability to top-spin, stun and screw the ball all over the table; the techniques are perfectly straightforward. Nothing is more satisfying in a game of pool than watching the white ball come to a stop in exactly the position you've dictated by the use of spin.



Spin Shots: Control of the cue ball using stun and screw

POOL FOR PROFIT

Gambling is an integral aspect of the etiquette of pub pool. According to Eddie Charlton's estimate, 90 percent of pub games in this country are played for money. "I don't know of any other game anywhere in the world — and especially in Australia — where more money is bet on the outcome," says Charlton. "The only exception is horseracing, which isn't a game but an organised avenue of gambling. The game of pool simply lends itself perfectly to the idea of having a bet."

To understand why pool players seem compelled to back themselves against all comers, you need to look at the history of the various pool games. The name of the game is itself derived from the pool of money staked by the players in the original English version of "pool." Whether the Americans derived their versions of pool from this game or from billiards is unknown, but they seem to have viewed pool as a gambling game from the outset, probably because it was normally played in dingy pool halls by low-life characters who needed to make a buck any way they could. So when the pub pool craze swept Australia in the Sixties, the gambling associations of the game were readily adopted in an environment where there was already a strong link between poking a stick and betting on the result. During the Depression, Australians who had no other means of supporting themselves often opted for either of two solutions: they took up boxing if they were very tough, or backing themselves at billiards and snooker if they weren't. Billiard halls with all their seedy connotations thrived during those hard times, and that's largely why the ability to play the game is still regarded as evidence of a misspent youth.

There was one game which outstripped even billiards and snooker for popularity in the halls and clubs of the Thirties, and that was Kelly Pool. Eddie Charlton remembers the days when his grandfather's billiard hall in Swansea, NSW was often chock full of punters trying to pick up some pocketmoney on Kelly Pool. "The idea was that each player would select a marble with the number of his ball on it. You had to sink your own ball to win, or put everyone else out of the game by sinking all of their balls. The winner collected the pool of prize-money. Kelly Pool was immensely popular because it could be played by a lot of people at once, and it was a game you could bet on — but it wasn't 'gambling' in the illegal sense of the word. The local policeman always used to say to my grandfather: 'No betting on the marbles' — because blokes would want to have a bet on what marble they pulled out of the bag, and that's illegal gambling. But you've always been allowed to back yourself to win a game of pool, since it's a test of *skill*. Australians will bet on two flies crawling up a wall, but they especially like to bet on their own skill. I do it myself all the time because I like to have an interest in the game — but you have to realise that this is completely different from hustling."

In *The Hustler*, "Fast Eddie" Felson demonstrated the classic technique of luring his opponent into a killing by allowing him to win smaller stakes on previous games. But as "Steady Eddie" Charlton points out, hustling isn't suited to the Australian environment: "It's always been possible to hustle pool in the States because of the number of big cities there. Once you've made a killing somewhere you've got to move on, and I would think that a top hustler in Australia probably wouldn't be able to pull if off for more than a couple of years. Hustling was pretty big here during the Depression and I suppose it's made a bit of a comeback, but the number of hustlers is completely overshadowed by the number of players who just want to back themselves at pool."

The other factors that inhibit genuine

It takes the game out of the hands of fate and puts it in your own. But although you can start playing the centre-axis spin shots immediately, it takes years of practice before you can control them perfectly.

B. TACTICS

One of the essential differences between snooker and pool is the order of priorities. In snooker, potting is the most important aspect, followed by cue ball control and then tactics. In pool, potting again takes priority, closely followed by tactics and finally cue ball control. The distinction stems from the fact that the outcome of a game of pool rests entirely on the final ball — the black. A pool player scores no points for an impressive string of consecutive pots, and it is often to his advantage not to pot certain balls. So the pool tactician plays the game as if he were playing chess: he engineers his pieces into a killing position and then begins a predetermined pattern of moves which inevitably leads to checkmate — the potting of the black.

Tactics in a game of pool are basically common sense. There are three elementary axioms: (1) Gain an advantage and retain it; (2) If you have an advantage, aim to clean up as soon as possible; (3) If your opponent holds an advantage, play to remove it from him. There's no situation on a pool table that is not covered by these rules, so if you bear them in mind when considering each of the following aspects of tactical play, you can't go wrong.

(i) Covering Pockets: When you leave a ball lying in the jaws of a pocket in snooker it is usually fatal, whereas in pool it is often a huge advantage. Obviously if you were able to cover every pocket with one of your own balls your opponent would be shut right out of the game, and you could clean up at will. But this isn't going to happen unless your opponent is an imbecile, so you should concentrate on: (a) covering the two corner pockets nearest the triangle (these are the most important pockets on a pool table, and gaining control of them will in theory make it virtually impossible for you to lose); (b) covering the pockets into which your opponent would most easily pot his balls. However, unless you're in the final stages of a game, these moves apply only to corner pockets. Covering up side pockets is basically a waste of time, because it's too easy for your opponent to pot a ball into the side by ricocheting it off your own, which would leave your ball on the cushion. If you're lucky enough to have a ball sitting over a side pocket, get rid of it as soon as possible. When you're wondering whether to pot a ball or sit it over the pocket instead, refer to the three axioms: that is, don't waste time covering pockets when you can clean up, and don't waste an opportunity to stuff up your opponent if you're struggling. When you are playing a ball to cover a pocket, it's safer to bounce it off the cushion near the jaw rather than try to pull it up just short. And when you are aiming to pot a ball, always consider whether you can still get position on your next shot by playing soft, which will leave you in control of the pocket even if you miss. Naturally, you can't do that if the table isn't playing true.

Covering pockets is a crucial aspect of any average player's game. On the other hand, Eddie Charlton seldom bothers with it, since he regards it as "negative tactics." If you can play like Eddie Charlton you can probably afford to forget about covering up as well; otherwise, play it smart. But be aware that if you're playing "gentlemen's rules" against somebody who ain't no gentleman, you'll end up having your balls belted away from the pocket jaws as fast as you can put them there. In this case, go for the pot instead.

(ii) Cleaning Up: There are so many possible variations that generalisations are of limited value. Some examples will illustrate better the way to approach a clean-up. If you are in a position where you have one ball over a pocket and another more difficult ball to pot, while your opponent is on the black, you naturally take the ball over the pocket first to get better position on the more difficult ball. But if your opponent has one ball left and your ball over the pocket is blocking his shot at it, you then take your more difficult ball first, because

pool sharks in Australia are the quality of the unfamiliar tables they have to play on and the risky nature of the game itself. Luck plays a vital role in pool, where one slip on the black means disaster and mediocre players often win by covering pockets when they're trying to sink their balls instead. Snooker, which is normally played on good quality club tables and is almost always won by the superior player, is much more amenable to hustling. There are plenty of sharks who make a reasonable wage on the club snooker circuit. Eddie Charlton isn't one of them: "I've always made it a rule never to be the one who suggests a bet." They don't call him Steady Eddie for nothing.

Although hustlers might be a rarity in the pub pool scene, players who'll put big money on pool games are a dime a dozen. "When I've been on exhibition tours around Australia," says Charlton, "I've seen blokes backing themselves for $1000 and more on a single game, and as a professional player I'd reckon they couldn't play the game to save themselves. But they know the faults on the table, they know the other bloke has to play on it as well, they know they're evenly matched, so off they go for the money. You'd never get people risking that sort of money on any other game, but when it comes to pool everyone reckons they're the expert."

Maybe the compulsion to bet is also inspired by the machismo of the sport. That's borne out by the rationale of Mike Heka, a quixotic 43-year-old New Zealander who's widely regarded as the sharpest cue in Sydney's west. Heka, who habitually bets in telephone numbers, once picked up a $20,000 car and $3000 cash from a single game. He recently placed an advertisement in a Sydney daily offering to take on anybody at $10,000 for the best of 21 frames. "A couple of grand here and there is no big deal," he says. "My dream is to make a real killing at pool and then blow it all in one bet at the track."

Money isn't the only currency among pub pool gamblers. There used to be several hotels in the NSW border city of Albury where the pub rules stated that a beer had to be waged on every game. Some years back Albury's *Border Morning Mail* carried a story relating the outcome of a carnal knowledge proceeding. Apparently two local characters had played a game of pool to decide who should have the honor of performing the deed. An amused magistrate placed the offender on a $50 good behavior bond.

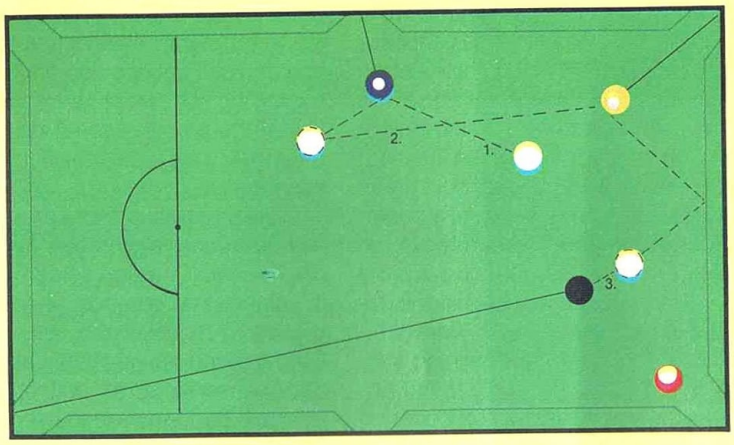
If you've mastered the techniques outlined in this article and you want to start converting your expertise into cash, here are some useful guidelines suggested by a veteran of the sport:

(1) If you're only looking for pocketmoney, any location will do — providing that you are completely familiar with the tables. You can't walk into an unknown pub and expect to win against the locals. If you want to make a living out of the game, the best chance is to head for Melbourne. There the lack of poker machines and the immense popularity of pub pool produce the greatest number of big pool punters.

(2) Your first move is to watch for a while and determine who is good and who isn't. Look for a table where games are already being played for cash. If there's none, the accepted way to introduce a bet is to inquire whether the local custom is to play for a beer. With luck your opponent will raise the stakes immediately. If he doesn't, look elsewhere.

(3) Never judge your chances of beating an opponent by the extent of his drunkenness. Pool seems to be one of those sports where performance can be positively enhanced by massive alcohol consumption — as opposed to darts, where a skinful can be fatal. This caution applies particularly to drunks who've been playing consistently all evening. The alcohol seems to remove all external stimuli, allowing them to focus entirely on the game. Drunks have an incredibly annoying habit of swaying and staggering all over the place, then suddenly snapping into perfect form when they have to play a shot.

(4) Always get the money on the table before the game begins. And be prepared for sore losers. If you get a chance, take the money and run.



Clean-ups: Planning a sequence to get position on the black

DIRTY POOL

even if you miss, you retain control of the game because he can't pot his own ball. This simple example illustrates the need to take account of your opponent's balls, as well as your own, when you're trying to work out a sequence of shots that will eventually put you on the black. Bearing that in mind, the way to plan a clean-up sequence is to work backwards from the black, figuring out where you have to put the cue ball to pot it and how you'll get there from the previous shot. When you've got that down, go through the sequence forwards, starting with the ball you have to pot first. When it's all clear in your mind, you're ready to start the clean-up.

The diagram above illustrates the need to plan ahead by working backwards from the black. If you were to take the ball into the corner pocket first instead of playing the sequence as shown, you *might* still get position on the second ball, and you *might* then be able to take the cue ball to the baulk cushion and right back down the table for the black. But the less distance the white ball covers, the more control you have over it. By playing the sequence as shown you reduce the margin for error and get position on the black much more easily.

(iii) Safety: The basic tenet of safety is to give your opponent no chance of cleaning up. Most players don't start thinking about safety until the final stages of the game, which is often too late. Always look for ways to hamper your opponent, especially if he's in front, by snookering him, blocking his access to balls and pockets, removing his balls from areas around the pockets, and keeping a safe distance between them and the cue ball. When the game does get down to the wire, safety becomes crucial; 50 percent of pool games are won or lost on tactical manoeuvres where the black ball is involved. Consider, for instance, a situation in which you have one easy ball to pot and your opponent is on the black, which is in a difficult position on the cushion. Sinking your easy ball to put yourself on the black ball would be a tactical blunder. You're better off leaving the black safe and simply playing your own ball to the lip of the pocket, which forces your opponent to remove the black from its safe position. You then clean up on your next shot. In the case of a black ball game, both players must strive to keep the greatest possible distance between the black ball and the cue ball. There are two ways of retaining a length-of-the-table distance between the two balls. One is to clip the black with a fine cut, playing with topspin, so as to move it only a short distance while bringing the cue ball back down the table to its original position. The other is to make a near full-ball contact on the black so as to bring it back down the table while leaving the cue ball at the other end. The choice of shots depends on which end of the table you're playing from. Eddie Charlton explains: "If I'm playing the cue ball from the baulk end to the top end, I will play the fine cut on the black because the cue ball is travelling with the nap and thus will not have its path influenced by nap restriction, as it would if running against the nap. There is no way, on any table, that I would attempt the thin edge when playing against the nap. Should the cue ball turn off its course only slightly, it could miss the black, costing you the frame." In this case, you play the full-ball contact shot instead.

(iv) Snookering: Playing for snookers in pool is a very effective extension of safety play, but it can also be used as an aggressive tactic, the objective being to grab the extra shot you need to make a clean-up possible. When deciding whether to play for a snooker or a pot, apply the three axioms of tactical play. Be on the lookout for snookers all the time, from the moment the game begins. Especially watch for a situation where you can snooker your opponent behind two balls that are lying together. The snooker is both easier to get and harder to escape from under these conditions. But remember that snookers are only really effective when you're playing the proper two-shot penalty rules.

(v) Playing For Advantage: Every time you play a shot in pool, you should consider whether, in the course of that shot, you can either improve the position of your own balls or impair the position of your opponent's. For instance, you may be able to play a pot by ricocheting off your opponent's ball, thus leaving it on the cushion; you may be able to bring one of your own balls off the cushion and into a better position by playing the cue ball off the object ball on to the difficult ball; and so on. As in all games, the obvious requirement is to put plenty of thought into every shot.

If you ask Eddie Charlton what makes him so good at playing pool, he'll answer this way: "It isn't my technique, or concentration, or eyesight, or ball sense, or endurance — it's none of those things really. It is simply the overall *knowledge* that I've picked up from 30 years of consistently playing the game. I know things about snooker that the average player — and a lot of the professionals — wouldn't even dream of. For instance, I could show you a dozen shots where the cue ball is struck with a different action to produce the desired result, even though you're hitting it in precisely the same spot. I could show you shots which were never possible before and which I've realised are now possible with the new super-super-crystallate balls. And I could show you shots that I see players attempting all the time in pubs and clubs which are simply not on — they only *appear* to be on. Let's be serious about this: the various games played on a billiard table are in my opinion the most difficult and exacting ball games played anywhere in the world. I base that view on the fact that there are so very few players in the top echelon in comparison with other sports. You have to be completely in love with the game to get to the top, and there is no substitute for the knowledge that you pick up during practice."

From those statements it's clear that if you want to become competent enough to walk into a pub, blow the champion off the table and then consistently beat all comers, you'll have to practise the techniques and employ the tactics outlined in this article regularly, and learn from your mistakes at all stages. There's no sense in pretending otherwise. When you do become good enough to dominate a pool table for an entire evening, then it's time to consider two questions. The first is how to make some bucks out of your ability to beat pool players in pubs (see box). The second is how to know when the interests of your health would be better served by losing. This question overrides all the previous observations about pub pool survival, because as Eddie Charlton says, "There is nothing you can do in a game of pool that is more likely to anger your opponent than beating him." How you handle that problem is up to you.

What goes on and what comes off
at the resort with the reputation.

Can your body take a week on Great Keppel?

Advertising supplement Aust. Penthouse, November, 1984.

Maybe you've heard some of those wild rumours about the Island in the sun or you're wondering whether to believe the resort's advertising. The answer is simple. You can expect to get wrecked. That's wrecked as in wrooted, blitzed, faceless, and all those other words that bring colour to the cheeks of maiden aunts.

Getting physical, Great Keppel Island lies directly off the coast from Rockhampton, a city known variously as "Queensland's Gateway to The Tropics," "Rocky" and (if there's a band in town), "Rock Vegas."

From there it's a short flight over to the Island. The Queensland coast, veined with serpentine waterways, quickly falls away into the brilliant blue water of that part of the world. Keppel is in sight within 15 minutes, before most passengers have finished reading the in-flight brochure describing what they're flying over.

Keppel boasts 28 kilometres of beaches–something for everyone from sunbathers to sailors, from nudists to neckers, to use a nice old-fashioned term. And, unlike the coarse, coral sands of islands further north, Keppel's beaches are made up of fine white sand that's very easy on any part of the anatomy you care to place on it.

Never a dull moment.

Upon landing, guests are greeted by members of the Island Entertainment Team, a crew whose talents at raising a smile are said to be exceeded only by their legendary talents for raising hell. (The staff of 135 on Keppel operate, just like the guests, under the motto of life's fun seekers: "Nothing succeeds like excess.")

From reception, newies are escorted through the grounds to their rooms. This procession usually marches past the sybaritic Pool Bar, handily giving the oldies (those that have been at the Resort for a day or more) a chance to check out the incoming talent, and vice versa. It's a fine introduction to one of the lazy, sun-soaking options available to those whose energies don't always approach the levels necessary for windsurfing, sailing, snorkelling and all those other gung-ho, indecently healthy activities that can be indulged on Keppel.

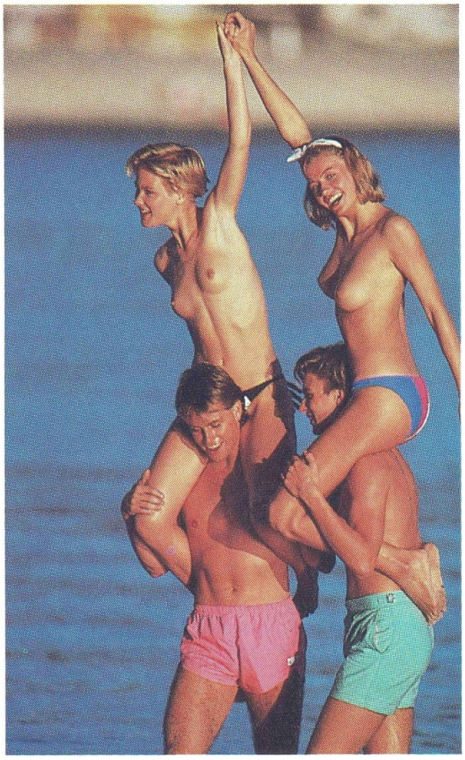
The Resort can accommodate around 320 people in spacious motel-style units. The place is full of ragers all year round, so don't worry about getting there and having to party on your own. The majority of visitors to the Island fall into that excitement-hungry and horny 18-35 age group.

All units at Keppel have balconies, built-in wardrobes, double beds, private bathrooms and surprise, surprise...bar fridges. This little white-goods item tends to be indispensible during room parties (frighteningly frequent functions), intimate get-togethers of two or more, when a little bubbly neck oil may be required, after 2 a.m. when the last wave of revelling flotsam is swept out of the late night Wreck Bar.

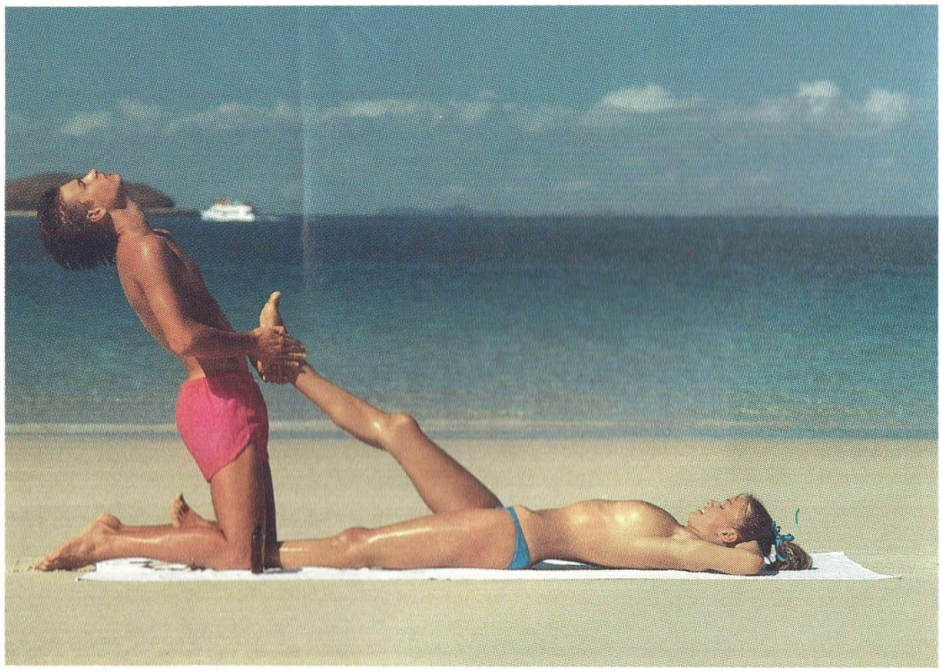
Keppel has three bars to slake the phenomenal thirsts of its guests. It does get pretty hot up there. The Pool Bar, at the centre of the Resort, is the early opener. It throws open its portals at 9.30 each morning to provide Bloody Marys for the hair of the dog brigade and liquid Wilkinson Swords for anyone suffering fur of the tongue. The early morning crowd is characterised by dark glasses, conversation that entails filling each other in on bits of the previous night one or the other fails to recall, and a tendency to repeat the words, "Did we rage, or what?" No-one, but no-one, would dare order a daiquiri at this time of day–the grinding squeal of a blender is about the most painful torture anyone could inflict on his fellow man on a still Keppel morning.

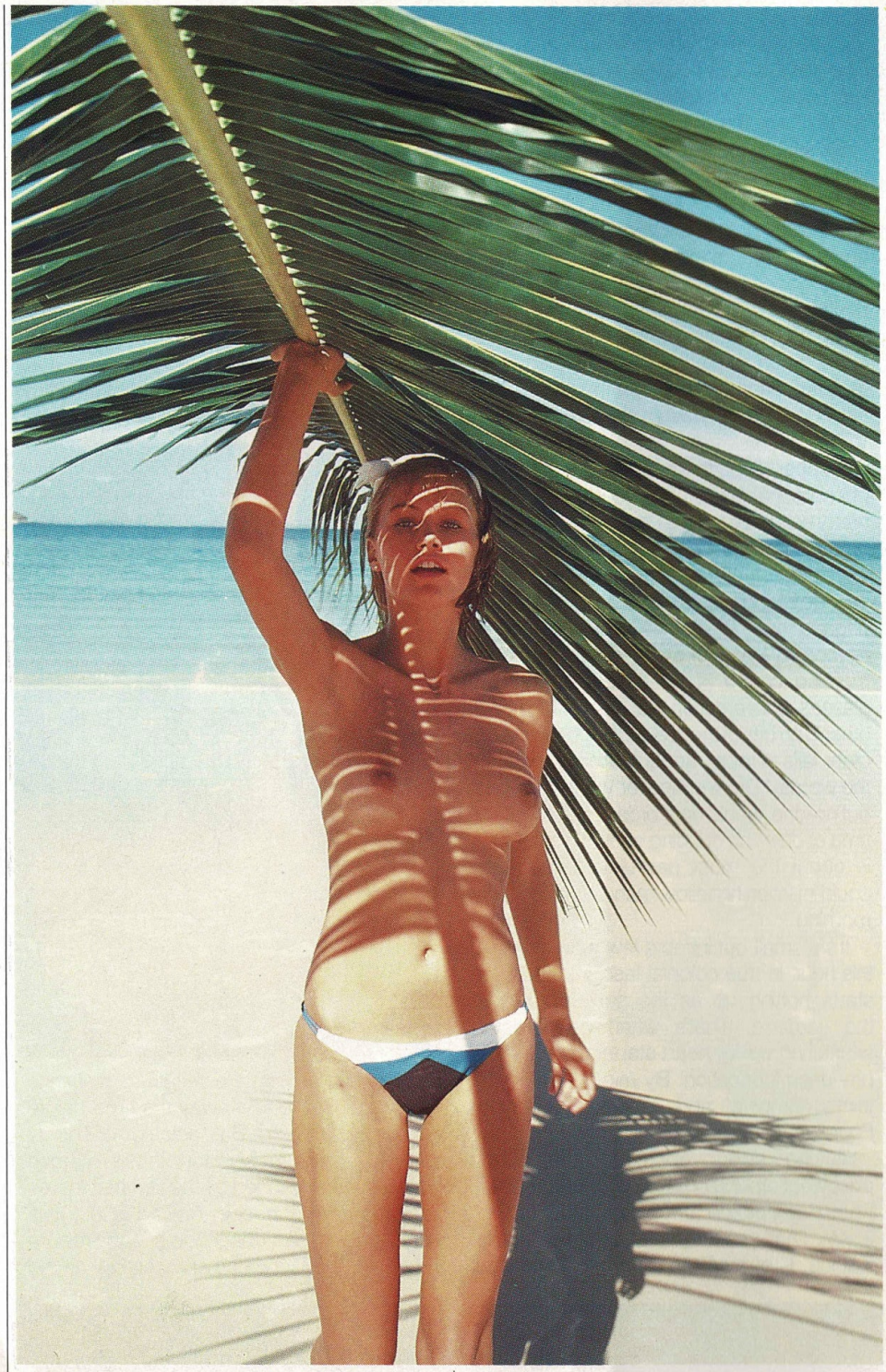
It's a small but intrepid few who gather at this hour. In true colonial fashion, the action starts hotting up as the sun approaches the yardarm. That's when people start sauntering up for heart-starters and a bit of pre-lunch lubrication. By mid-afternoon the joint's jumping and the cocktails and Fourexes are flying fast.

Talking about cocktails, they don't pussyfoot around on Keppel. Check out the Pool Bar cocktail book and order a Pink Pussy. That's a heady little combo of Tequila, Kahlua, Cream, Grenadine and lemonade. Or, if you reckon your hormone count's up to it, try a Sex Machine (Tequila, Kahlua and Southern Comfort). It may sound like a physical impossibility, but after that you could have an Orgasm, (Galliano, Cointreau, White Creme De Cacao, orange juice, cream and milk). Up there, a cocktail's a cocktail. A favourite among the particularly foolhardy is a little curiousity known as an ET. It consists of Kahlua, White Creme De Cacao, Creme De Menthe and Creme Banana. Have a close encounter with the sucker and you won't need Scotty to beam you up.



By late afternoon, the trend is to migrate to the Sand Bar to wile away the time before dinner. The Sand Bar actually opens at 11a.m., presumably for those whose faculties are offended by the fact that there's a sun up in the sky. Around dusk, this beachfront watering hole affords a spectacular view of the crimson sky as the





sun takes a dive over the mainland. As well as catering for the pre-dinner throng, the Sand Bar is the venue for after-dinner high jinks, sort of an ongoing Mondo Cane organised by the Keppel Entertainment squad.

Heading the Team is a genial Ghengis Khan of a fellow who goes by the name of Beast. He's a fascinating character who came to the island six years ago with his band and stayed to party every night and hibernate every day since. Get him talking about his days as an entertainer on the U.S. bases during the Vietnam War, and his days on the road in Australia.

Beast is often helped out by a comely young sort by the name of Jools and together they preside over an evening's entertainment that may include live music, humor and a lot of weird competitions where everyone gets into the act, proving indisputedly that people really do let their hair, and everything else down, when they're away from home.

Ah, then there's the Wreck Bar, the Great Hall of Excess from whence much of the Island's notoriety has sprung. It opens at 11 and jumps till 2 for those with the staying power, dancing feet and insatiable urges to experience it to the max. There's always live music from the Island's resident band, interspersed with disco when the boys take their breaks. It's here that the big mainland bands strut their stuff when they swoop in on Keppel. And they swoop in with great regularity.

As might be expected there's always a hefty crowd wrecking on till two. After that there's usually a bit of a scene back at the pool with a few take-away bottles or cans more than a few naked bodies a-frolicking and a decided lack of inhibition.

Then of course there's fun with a capital "F" at room parties and beach parties that have a habit of happening every night.

There's a quaint tradition known as the Keppel Sandwich that involves a bunch of oiled bodies piling on top of each other as high as they can go in one squirming, writhing stack–boobs, bums, bellies and bug-eyes everywhere. It's a good, almost-decent appetiser when performed in swimming costumes and full daylight.

Tales of sexual heroics abound. Like the one about the group of girls, who stormed Keppel eager to live out their Robinson Crusoe fantasies. They were after a good Man Friday–and better ones every other night of the week. They were all for affirmative action–they weren't going to say no to anything.

In short, Keppel is always on heat–in more ways than one. Up there, any Lone Ranger can always find a Tonto or three.

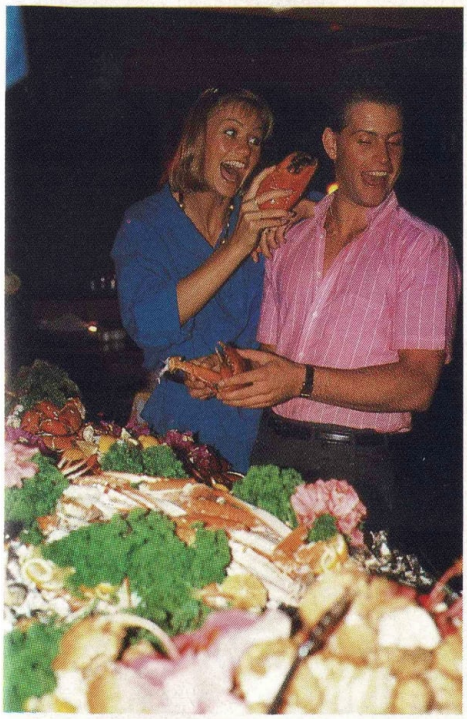
Wrecked in the sun.

Those pagans on Keppel don't confine their worship to Bacchus. Zealous devotion to the sun god makes this particular Fantasy Island almost a religious retreat for the scantily clad and liberally oiled.

It stands to reason. You can roll around your floor with a case of Fourex to your heart's content at home but you're not going to get a tan doing it.

And you certainly wouldn't have as much fun as doing it with a bit of female companionship beside the lapping Pacific, beneath a sun that never quits. Keppel has those 28 kilometres of beaches, remember, more than enough altar space for deep tan devotees to unfurl their towels and offer themselves up to the almighty dispenser of UVs. Some do it with their swimmers on, some do it without 'em and a lot of girls around the pools seem to do it in outfits that afford about as much protection as a couple of postage stamps and a shoelace. Consequently, the sun's out perving benignly over the place all year round.

For hyperactive sporting types and those who like to dabble with sails and snorkels and things, Keppel has what amounts to a giant sporting goods warehouse worth of toys to



expend your energies upon. On the Resort's long main beach there's a place called Keppel Kuatics where you can pick up the diversion of your choice. Up there they've got a habit of starting as many words as remotely possible with the little "K"–too much sun, perhaps, and so kute. Well, at Kuatics you can get a catamaran, a sailboard, fishing and snorkelling gear or you can book a lesson in whatever your aquatic passions run to. Then spend as long as you like falling into the water. If you want to play with something that uses fuel, there's a charge for it, which is fair enough, though never steep. If your diversion requires nothing more than your own steam and wind and water, you won't have to carry a brass razoo in your boardies.

One good way to get the Island into perspective and learn an amusing lesson in the power of the sea is to take a Booze Cruise. Check out when they're running by scanning The Daily Wrecker, the news and activities bulletin left outside rooms each day.

Then book in at Kuatics for a ride in a motor cruiser that plies the waters around the Island, plies you with alcohol if you're up to mid-morning drinking and offers the chance to go boom-netting. That's where the lesson comes in. Boom-netting is sort of like finding out what it would be like to be a fish. Game little fishies climb into a big rope net suspended into the ocean from a boom out from the cruiser.

Then the boat takes off in one direction and, if you're not careful, your swimming costume takes off in another. If you pack a nice lunch, you may wish to advertise the fact to the girls on board by going boom-netting every day. If you don't or if you wish to maintain your masculine mystique until after dark, be warned, and hang on to your strides.

Landlubbers can keep themselves out of trouble by bouncing with a beach volleyball or giving friends a serve on the tennis courts. Keppel has two immaculate courts and they're floodlit at night for anyone who'd rather play at Wimbledon than play around.

You can quiver up at the archery range and have a lesson from one of the resident Robin Hoods. And for anyone who wields a wild willow or lobs a bit of leather, The Keppel Kricket Klub throws up frequent opportunities for cricket nuts to show off their technique. The staff cricket team takes their game just about as seriously as anything can be taken on Keppel and they've established a sporting tradition that leans not so much toward the "Englishmen" side of the game as the "mad dog" aspect of it.

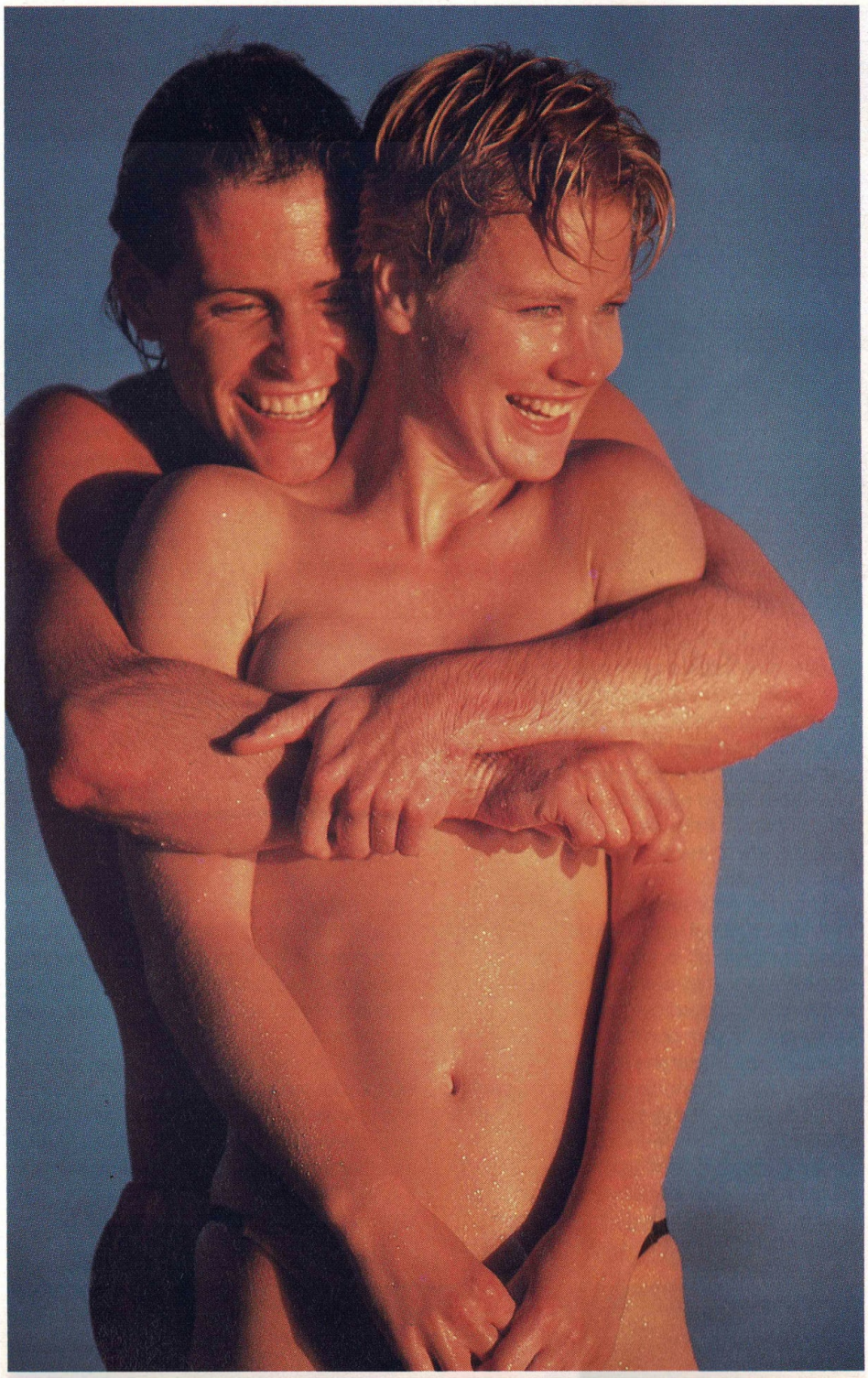
A variety of competitions are organised every day by the Entertainment staff, giving contestants opportunities to win a bottle or three of Beastly Bubbly, a cheeky little drop that very definitely lives up to its name.

There's no shortage of ways to wreck yourself in the sun on Keppel and anyone who could fit a bit of everything into one week is a better man than I am, Gungadin. After an effort like that, a bloke would need a drink.

Wreck your diet.

Many have tried valiantly to prove otherwise, but there's no escaping the fact that a body cannot live on booze alone. On Keppel they've got that situation well under control and the meals they lay on, far from providing mere bodily sustenance, have a frequent habit of veering toward the magnificent.

Mealtimes in a set-up like Keppel serve a vital social function. It's at breakfast, lunch and dinner that conversations get started and friendships kindled. Such chatty togetherness is fostered in the large Admiral Keppel Dining Room where many of the tables are large enough to seat six or ten.



There is also no shortage of tables for two for honeymooning types and those who've graduated, through the process of natural selection, to something a little more intimate. On Keppel, it's standard procedure during breakfast and lunch to pile your porcelain with a bit of this and that, survey the interior landscape of the Dining Room then plonk yourself down at the table that shows the most promise.

Meals are included in the price of accommodation at Keppel and their kitchens cater for all tastes. Breakfast and lunch are informal buffet affairs where you saunter along a parade of hot and cold edibles that stretches the length of the glass wall of the restaurant. At breakfast there's the choice of cereals, juices, eggs in a variety of styles, snags, bacon, tomatoes and all those other breakfasty type things as well as a wealth of melons, pineapple and other tropical fruit. There's always a good turn-up of bodies seeking fuel.

Lunch is a buffet of salads, cold meats and fish, hot dishes and fruits. Guests can pile up plates and do the table trick inside or take themselves outside into the sunshine to sit at shaded tables by the beach.

Now dinner is a different matter altogether. It's a la carte, with table food and drink service and a menu that encompasses four courses. You may order one or two courses or go the whole hog and tuck into a meal that may run something like: Seafood chowder, Canadian Smoked Salmon, Steak Diane and Blueberry Pie with cream or any number of other combinations which change throughout the week.

A parting word for those who enjoy seafood: Make sure your stay on Keppel includes at least one Friday night. That's when island dining takes on Fletcher Christian fantasy proportions. The feast takes place by the poolside and veritable mountains of seafood of all kinds are up for grabs along with loads of salads, cold cuts, tropical fruits and cheeses. That's when they carve up the porker that's been doing lazy, sizzling somersaults on a spit all day. Friday night is definitely pig-out night. Like every other day or night there's little worry about starving to death on Great Keppel.

Training for wrecking.

Keppel advertising has always promised, or threatened, that you'll need a holiday when you return from the place. Believe it. Anyone wishing to Keppel themselves to the hilt should take a hint from the nearest boy scout and "Be Prepared."

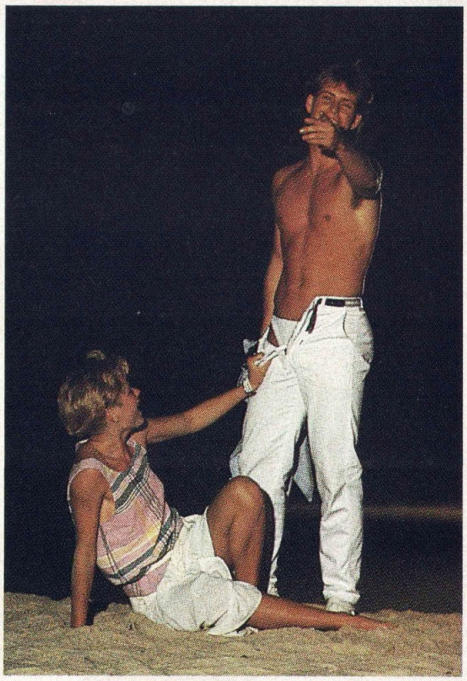
Training needn't assume Olympic proportions, but before taking off it usually pays to do a few things. Things like sleeping for the week leading up to your departure,

The major requirement in a Keppel Survival Kit would have to be a clutch of suntan preparations. Take something with a sunscreen if you're planning to expose parts that seldom see light of day. There's nothing like wanting to play the last of the red hot lovers but being too red hot to do it.

The Keppel Kit for survival.

Some less protective stuff is the go for when your skin becomes accustomed to the tropics and massage oil is always useful for a variety of purposes. A hat, some shades and a beachtowel complete the solar section of the kit.

Nothing to do with Great Keppel is complete without a supply of vitamins. For a week or two, some potent Cs and Bs will ensure that precious bodily fluids keep



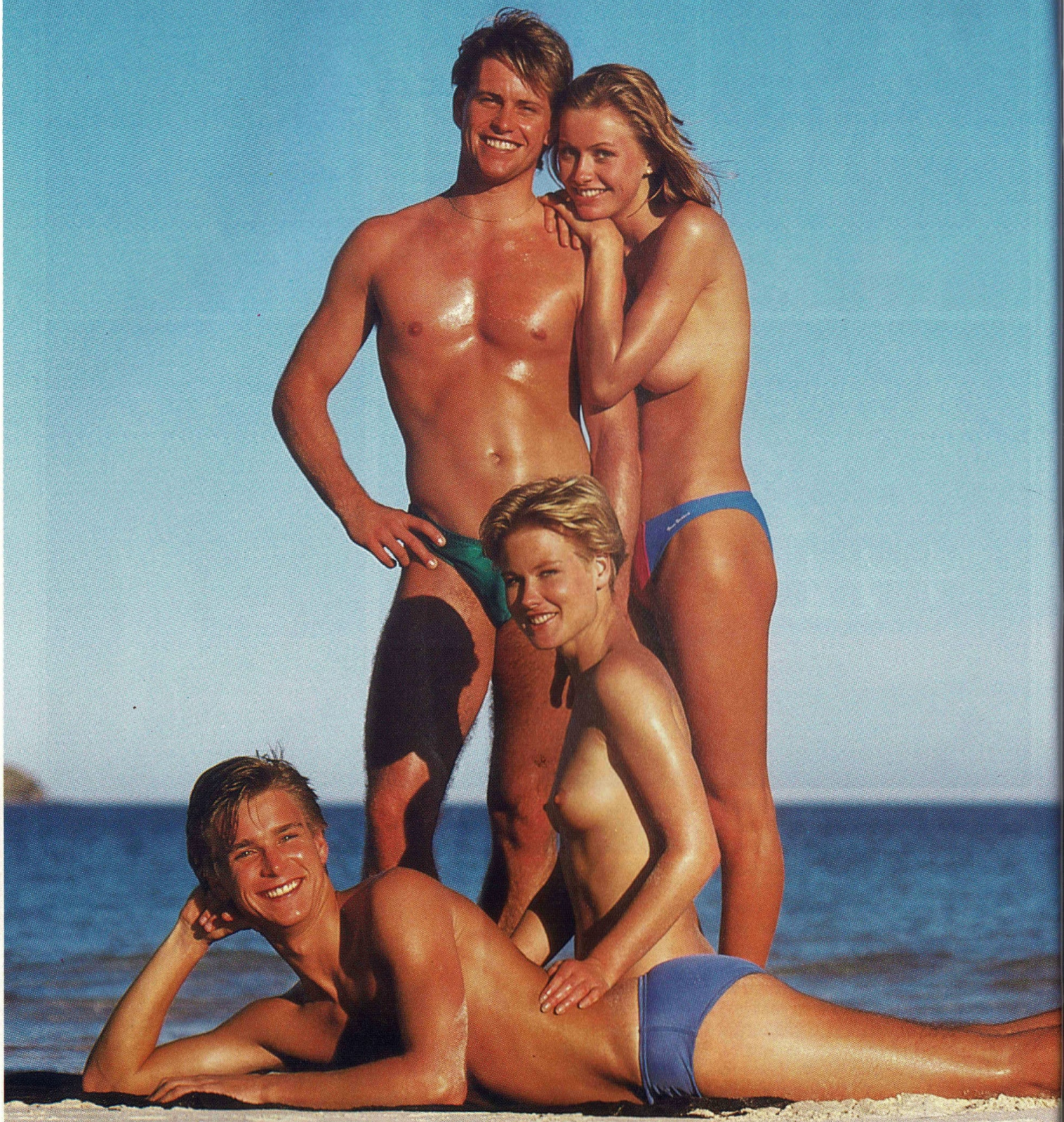
eating vitamin enriched foods and taking it easy on the grog. All faculties should be in peak condition before attempting an assault on Keppel. Try a few wrist and finger exercises to strengthen your grip on sailboards, racquets and tinnies and throw in a few mental exercises to strengthen your grip on reality in the face of Keppel mindbending. A few solarium sessions can aid in quick assimilation into the bronzed set and allow you to hit the sun with some staying power as soon as you arrive. Things to leave behind include pretentions, work worries, inhibitions and your teddy bear. There's no place for the first three up there and the joint's alive with guarantees that you won't miss teddy.

pumping and while you're at it, chuck in some good headache tablets. If you need a reason for those inclusions, you haven't been paying attention.

As mentioned earlier, nights on Great Keppel are alive with music in the Sand Bar, the Dining Room and the Wreck Bar. However, there's no music in the units. Most are thankful for this after a few days' hard Keppeling, but if you're one of those who thrives on vibes, take a Walkman or something small to feed your habit. Apart from being a hassle to lug around, thumping big ghetto-blasters tend to make hibernating hangover sufferers see even redder.

That little swag should ensure survival of sorts. Any other requirements apart from unlimited energy can be picked up at the Island Shop which is open every day. And if after all that you're wondering if there's such a thing as life after Keppel, rest assured there is. But it's seldom quite as lively.

Great Keppel Island.



It's a great place to get wrecked.

See your travel agent or TAA.

You're an animal Maurice . . .

Crank phone calls were haunting the film star's wife. Hardy had to catch the culprit before he found his victim

THE BIG PINCH

FICTION BY PETER CORRIS

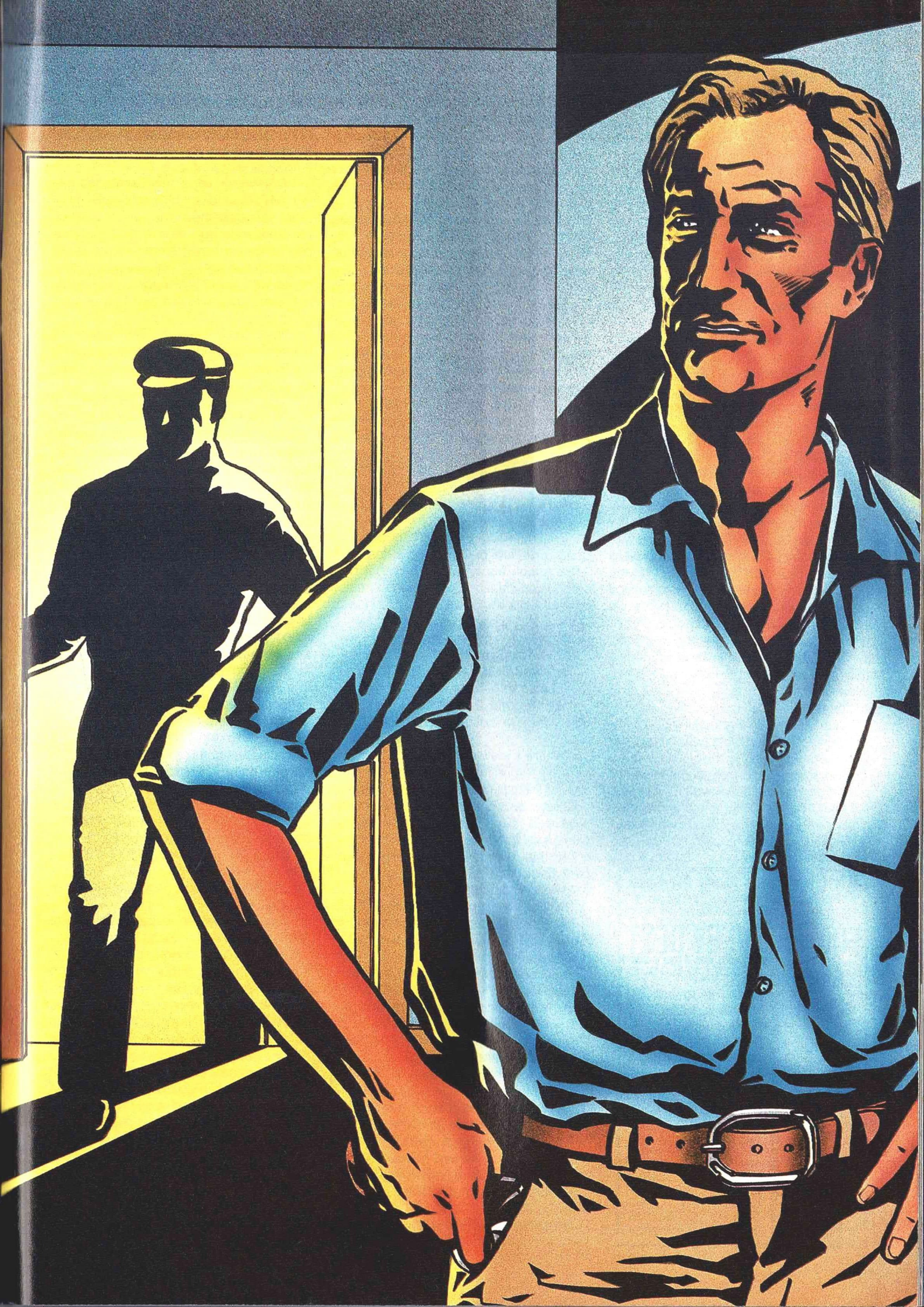
I felt a pang — I won't deny it — when I yanked out the pin that held the card to the door. I crumpled the card and put it in my pocket, then closed the door. "CLIFF HARDY INVESTIGATIONS" was out of business.

As I went down the corridor, past the horoscope caster, I tried to remember how much turnover there'd been along that corridor in the 12 years I'd graced it with my presence. A lot, and now my turn had come.

I could have met the rent for another month — hell, the rent was paid a couple of weeks in advance — but there didn't seem to be any point in sitting there listening to my hair grow. *Get out, Cliff,* I could hear a voice saying. *Don't wait until you can't pay the rent — retire with the title.*

I tried a little Gene Kelly dance on the stairs, telling myself it would be a relief to go to work for the Roger Wallace Agency — to get a salary cheque and be insured against breakage. A company car, maybe. Eight steps down, I lost balance and would have fallen if a man coming up hadn't steadied me. His grip on my arm was

ILLUSTRATION BY GLENN FORD



THE BIG PINCH

firm. I felt embarrassed, and more so that he knew me.

"Mr Hardy? Been watching *Flashdance?*"

"No, just young and foolish. Do I know you?"

"We've never met, but you were described to me. I want to hire you — that is, if you're not all tied up at Arthur Murray's."

He was a dark, smooth-featured man, a little shorter and wider than me, and he smelled of expensive aftershave when he pushed his smooth face close to my rough one.

"What's the idea?" I jerked my arm free.

"I wanted to see if you'd been drinking."

"I don't drink before six these days." I was thinking that today might be an exception.

"So I've heard. That's good. Can we talk business?"

What could I do? He looked, smelled and moved like money, and a flash company car would only get vandalised in my street anyway. Still, I nearly reverted to my previous decision when I found out he was in the movie business. He leaned forward and rested his elbows in the dust on my desk, laced his fingers under his chin, and talked. It sounds uncomfortable, but it's actually not a bad talking posture; it gave him a forward-thrusting, determined look.

"My company starts shooting today, this afternoon. That's Boston Pictures. We . . ."

"Boston?"

"Just a name. We're making . . ."

"Why not Brisbane Pictures, Mr Boston?"

He sighed. "I was told you had a sense of humor. I suppose that was it. My name is Fuller, Richard Fuller. I'm the executive producer of a movie called *Death Feast.*"

"I haven't read the book."

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"It's not that sort of picture. There hasn't been a book; there never will be a book. Trouble is, there mightn't be a picture unless I can get this wrinkle ironed out."

I liked a good command of metaphor. I nodded and shut up, and let Fuller smoke his cigarettes in a tar-guard holder and tell it the way he wanted to.

"*Death Feast* is an action picture, a sort of cop 'n' robbers thing set in Sydney. Kurt Butler's the star. The script is better than average, we've got great locations and a terrific crew." He drew deeply on his low tar, filtered, tar-guarded cigarette and filled his lungs luxuriously. "We've also got a TV pre-sale. Big one. You know what that means?"

"I suppose the picture has a chance of coming out ahead."

"Has to. Can't help it." He expelled the smoke and took in some more. "If the bloody thing ever gets shot. Some crank's threatened Kurt's wife; he wanted to pull out and take her to Acapulco or some damned place. I promised I'd handle it, make him happy. You're the solution we came up with."

"Why not delay the thing? Check on the crank, grab him or wait till he stops?"

He shook his head. "We've got non-completion clauses, other people are tied up later, weather problems — it's now or never."

"How long's the shooting last?"

"Six weeks."

"I charge $125 a day. You're looking at 5000 bucks."

"We've got a 2.3 million budget. As a below-the-line cost, it's a piddle in the bay."

"Where's the wife going to be? There'll be a big expense sheet if I have to hang around Palm Beach renting speedboats."

"She'll be on the set every day. She always is. Kurt doesn't comb his hair without asking her first."

"Is that why the crank's working on her? To get at him?"

"I hadn't thought of it."

"Who's handling the crank angle?"

"No-one. That's another problem. I'll pay you 150 a day. No, let's say 175."

"What for?"

He looked nervous for the first time, maybe for the first time in his life. "You won't like it. Kurt plays a private eye in the film. He thinks it will help his performance if he can sort of assist you in your investigation of the crank calls."

"I'm investigating them, am I? Not just guarding the wife?"

"Hell, the set'll be bristling with security men. She'll be as safe as houses."

I squinted against a ball of light that came in the window and bounced off the metal filing cabinet behind Fuller.

"You didn't exactly play that very straight, did you?"

He grinned. "Sort of sideways."

"I expected a better metaphor." He looked puzzled and I slammed down the front legs of the chair I'd been leaning back in. "Skip it. Write me a below-the-line cheque. Show me how generous you are."

It was generous enough to make me forget about rent and Roger Wallace.

I followed Fuller's new Commodore in my old Falcon to Leichhardt, where the interior scenes of the movie were to be shot. He stopped in front of a terrace house in one of the narrower streets and a plane roared overhead as I stood outside the place with Fuller. He spoke, but the jet noise drowned him out and I leaned my head towards him.

"Hear that?" he said. "That's what we wanted — great dramatic effect."

"Yeah," I said. "It'll cut down on the dialogue."

"Always a plus. Come and meet the mad house."

I followed him into the house, which looked as if a giant metal arm had ripped out all the walls and half the ceiling. The rooms seemed to have been dismembered and the floor was crawling with black power leads. There were forests of light stands and boom microphones and clusters of cameras that seemed to be talking to each other. There wasn't a canvas-backed chair in sight, but a group of people were squatting on a few uncluttered square inches of floor. One had a rolled up manuscript in his hand and was thumping the boards with it. If he wasn't the director, the film was in trouble already.

"Scene conference," Fuller whispered. "Better not disturb them. Coffee?"

I shook my head; drinking coffee in the morning makes me want to drink wine in the afternoon. "Fill me in on the people."

"Okay. Kurt you'll know; the guy with the script is Iain McLeish, who's directing it; the little man with the hair is Bob Space, the writer; the other guy is Josh Wild — he's an actor — and the blonde is Jardie, Kurt's wife."

"I bet her Mum never called her Jardie."

"Her Mum would've called her Boss, like everyone else. Look at her now!"

The small blonde woman with the tight curls and the tight pants was laying down the law to McLeish. Butler watched her indulgently. I'd seen him on television in one of his tough guy roles in which he'd spent a lot of time naked or nearly so; if you needed an actor with shoulders you couldn't go past him. Space, who couldn't have stood much above five foot but had another four inches of woolly hair on top of that, was nodding at Jardie Butler's every word. He wore sloppy old trousers and a faded army shirt and his feet were bare; as he nodded he scribbled notes in a reporter's pad. Wild just looked straight ahead of him and McLeish looked down at the floor, perhaps at Space's feet. Butler clapped his hands and his actor's voice

boomed out across the technology-crammed room.

"Let's do it that way, sounds good. Let's get going!"

McLeish unsquatted and wandered off towards the back of the house. I heard his voice lift in a quick, angry Scots-accented shout.

Fuller and I picked our way across the snake pit.

"Kurt, this is Hardy, the guy we talked about."

Butler shook my hand in a powerful grip that must have started in the shoulders. "You agreeable?" he rumbled.

"We'll give it a try."

"Good. C'mon Josh, let's get fixed up. Should have some time to talk to you this afternoon. Is that right, love?"

Mrs Butler looked up a foot or so; she had a small, pointed face that looked even sharper when inclined. "Should be if that Scots twit is half as good as he thinks he is. I'll give Mr Hardy the details."

Butler nodded and he and Wild disappeared behind some cameras. Fuller was looking relieved that Jardie Butler hadn't said I was too tall or the wrong color. He slapped Bob Space on the shoulder and laughed. "Know what this guy said, Bob, when I told him about the picture? He said he hadn't read the book! Good?"

Space blinked two or three times quickly and bunched his fists; for a moment he was one and a half metres of pure aggression. Then he relaxed and let go a grin that showed his stained teeth. "Hah," he said. "The laconic Aussie wit we're famous for. D'you think you can get Kurt to be a bit warmer, Jardie love — touch less craggy? We're supposed to like him."

"How craggy should a private eye be, Mr Hardy?" She turned on me a pair of grey eyes that shone hard and cold like a slate roof in the rain.

"It depends how smart he is," I said. "If you need some extra cragginess you can always hire it."

She nodded. "After Richard shows you the set-up I'll tell you about our problem."

I broke down and accepted a cup of coffee while Fuller gave me the tour. The company had taken over three adjoining houses and gutted the middle one. There were generators, refrigerators and fans all over the place. I counted 15 telephones in the three houses. There were caravans in the biggest of the backyards and another couple in the laneway behind the houses.

"They're for the cast and some of the crew. I've got an office in one. Bob Space has a writing room in one."

"Hasn't he finished the script?"

"There're always changes. Sometimes it's handy to have the writer on deck. Space says he sees his script as fluid."

"Piss!" McLeish was suddenly standing beside us. He seemed to have a higher color than when I'd first seen him and he was sucking some kind of sweet. "Script started off just fine, just fine, but between them the Butlers and Space are rewriting it by the hour. It's getting worse."

"Shoot it your way, Iain. That's your job."

"Aye," McLeish said vaguely.

Butler and Wild were deep in conversation over a table covered with bottles and the crew were all packed around them, each man and woman performing some small, essential task. When Jardie Butler was satisfied with the look of things she beckoned me to go out back with her. She cocked one leg in skin-tight red satin pants over a low brick wall, took a deep breath of the Leichhardt air and gave me one of her Boss looks. She was strongly built, with wide shoulders and a flattish chest; her sex appeal was in her strength and she seemed to know it.

"You're no oil painting," she said. "How old are you?"

"Around 40."

"You look it. Kurt's 25 and looks 30. I wonder what he'll look like at 40."

"He said he'd throw acid in my face, or cut me. Said how would I look after I'd gone through a windscreen — stuff like that"

"It'll depend on the lighting. Tell me about these crank calls."

"They started about two weeks ago . . . no, three. Really weird stuff — like he said he'd throw acid in my face, or cut me. Said how would I look after I'd gone through a windscreen — stuff like that."

"Anything actually happen?"

"No, but I've had a creepy feeling — like I'm being watched. It's really got to Kurt."

"Was that the idea, d'you think? I mean, I suppose you could have enemies . . ."

She laughed. "You mean I'm a domineering bitch? You're right — I am. I haven't got any talents, you see, and a girl's got to make her way somehow."

"I guess so. Well, I'll hang around. I suppose I can go for a drive with Kurt, talk to a few people where you live, check a few things out. I don't really think I can give him the flavor of the work though."

"Humor him. It's a macho fantasy."

"I can't work out what you really think of him."

She grinned and a little warmth showed in the slate eyes. "Neither can I."

The next day was one of the most boring I can recall. I hung around the set while they ground out another two minutes. A copy of the script was lying around and I picked it up as a keepsake — from what I could see it was unlikely that I'd ever want to read it. I talked to Butler after he finished shooting and told him I'd check on whether there'd been any attempts to learn his unlisted number, then invited him to go with me to do some snooping in Whale Beach.

"No way, man. I'd like to but I just can't make it. Bob's done these new scenes and I've got to look 'em over tonight. Tell you what. I'm going for a run tomorrow, early. What say you come with me — six o'clock, say. You can tell me how it went."

We did the run and Butler couldn't resist keeping ahead of me and being more agile over the gutters. Leichhardt woke up around us: dogs yapped, trucks delivered to shops and the cooking smells in the street suggested better breakfasts than tea and toast. I did a fair bit of panting as Butler showcased. We didn't talk much. The action started at around 11 when Jardie Butler knocked over a camera and punched a cameraman who swore at her. I moved in fast to break it up and eased her away from the broken glass and the fuming technician.

"Easy, easy," I said. "What's the matter?"

"I got another one of those bloody calls! Right here, on the set!"

"Same voice?"

"I think so, yes."

"Describe it while it's fresh. What did he say?"

She shook slightly and I helped her to sit down on the steps of one of the caravans. "He said, he said . . . 'I'll wash your face for you . . . I'll wash it right off.' Ugh. It's a sort of thin, reedy voice, high . . ."

I got some brandy for her and then she showed me the phone in the end house where she'd taken the call. One of the daytime security men had called Jardie to the phone, but he couldn't recall anything special about the voice. He scratched his ear under his aggressively cropped hair.

"Funny thing though — that's a closed line."

"What d'you mean?" I snapped.

"You can only get that to ring by using one of the other phones on the set. Why, what's up?"

Jardie Butler's hands flew to her face and she covered it like a little girl playing hide-and-seek. "Jesus!"

"Don't worry, mate. Bit of a scare. Who else'd know about the closed line?"

"I dunno. Other security blokes should know, and the bloke that installed them, couple of the . . . what d'you call them? Assistants."

"Okay, could you do a job for me? Just keep a watch and make a note of anyone who leaves this morning. Don't stop them — just get the name and the time. Right?"

THE BIG PINCH

Like me, he looked glad to be relieved of the boredom and hurried off. I helped Jardie up and made her finish her brandy.

"We've got to do a tour quick — get to know everyone here. You know most of the names?"

"Most, not all."

"Descriptions or jobs for the rest. Let's go."

We prowled the three houses looking behind doors and checking in toilets: when we finished we had a list of 22 names and eight physical and 11 job descriptions. All the principals were there — Butler, McLeish, Space, Wild — and a gaggle of supporting players. There were technicians of various sorts and other functionaries, down to a kid who controlled car movement in the street and a cook. Jardie and I went through the list, crossing out names of people who couldn't have made the call because they were definitely otherwise engaged at the time, or because she could see them at the time of the call. Butler, McLeish and a big swag of the technicians went out; I removed myself from the list along with the security man who'd told us about the phone. I was about to cross out the wardrobe woman when Jardie stopped me.

"What're you doing? Where was she?"

"She's a she — you said it was a man."

"I'm not sure now; it could have been disguised."

"Christ, that opens it up."

"What do we do now? I'm impressed so far, by the way."

"The person who made the call wouldn't have known that it was an internal-calls-only phone. He or she wouldn't be worried about anything and there's no reason to think they'd act any different from normal. I guess I'll just have to check on all the obvious people — the ones who might have a reason to sabotage the film."

"That's no-one," Jardie muttered. "Haven't you heard how things are in this business? Work's work."

From the other house Butler's voice rose in a shout that lifted the dust. "I cannot work with that crazy bastard! What *is* the matter with him?"

It was a red alert to Jardie; she took off, scooting through the gap in the fence like a startled rabbit. I followed separately and stepped into a mad house: Butler, McLeish and Space were all shouting at each other simultaneously. Butler looked to be ready to use his fists on someone and McLeish had a bad, high color with veins throbbing in his forehead. Space had more control and seemed more excited than angry. Jardie pushed Space aside and he shut up and watched her go to work on Butler. Her technique could be described as a combination of stick and carrot. She whacked him in the ribs to cut his breath and then stroked his arm like a vet with a frightened animal. Her touch seemed to calm him and he touched her in return. Maybe they'd done an advance course in tactile therapy, because it seemed to do them both a lot of good.

McLeish ran out of steam and signalled to one of the young women whose function had never been clear to me. She ducked out back and came up with a glass and a bottle of Haig, and that doubt was answered. McLeish took a stiff belt as his way of cutting the breath, poured another and sipped.

"Okay, okay," he said quietly. "We've got a wee problem." He nodded to the whisky bearer. "Get his agent on the phone, lass. We'll work it out."

Space turned over script sheets rapidly. "Guess I could change the lines — even write him out if need be."

McLeish drained his glass in a one jerky swallow. "Christ man, you'll be giving us a new bloody film the way you're going. You've got first feature jitters — relax. The sensible people'll work it out, I tell you. Take a break, everybody."

He wandered off after the Haig bottle and I watched Butler pull on a sweatshirt over the T-shirt he'd been wearing for the scene. He seemed to approach his acting like an athletic event.

"What happened?" I asked.

"Wildy blew up," Butler said. "He's been acting crazy for days, from rehearsals on. I don't know what the hell's the matter with him. Now he's pissed off somewhere and this scene is shot to bits."

"Take it easy," Jardie said. "Have some coffee; have a rest." I'll go and settle him down."

"I don't want you going around unprotected," Butler said. "Not after the threats."

"What threats?" Space asked.

"Never mind, Bob. I am protected, you dummy." Jardie stroked her husband's arm and gripped the bicep. "I've got the guy we hired."

"I thought you were some kind of technical consultant," Space said. "That's what Richard told me."

"That's Richard's job. Go back to cutting scenes, Bob. Have a rest, hon. Let's go, Hardy."

A kind of defeated calm had settled on the three houses.

Fuller said. "Sometimes I wonder why I'm not making floppy discs or something — too many crazies in this business."

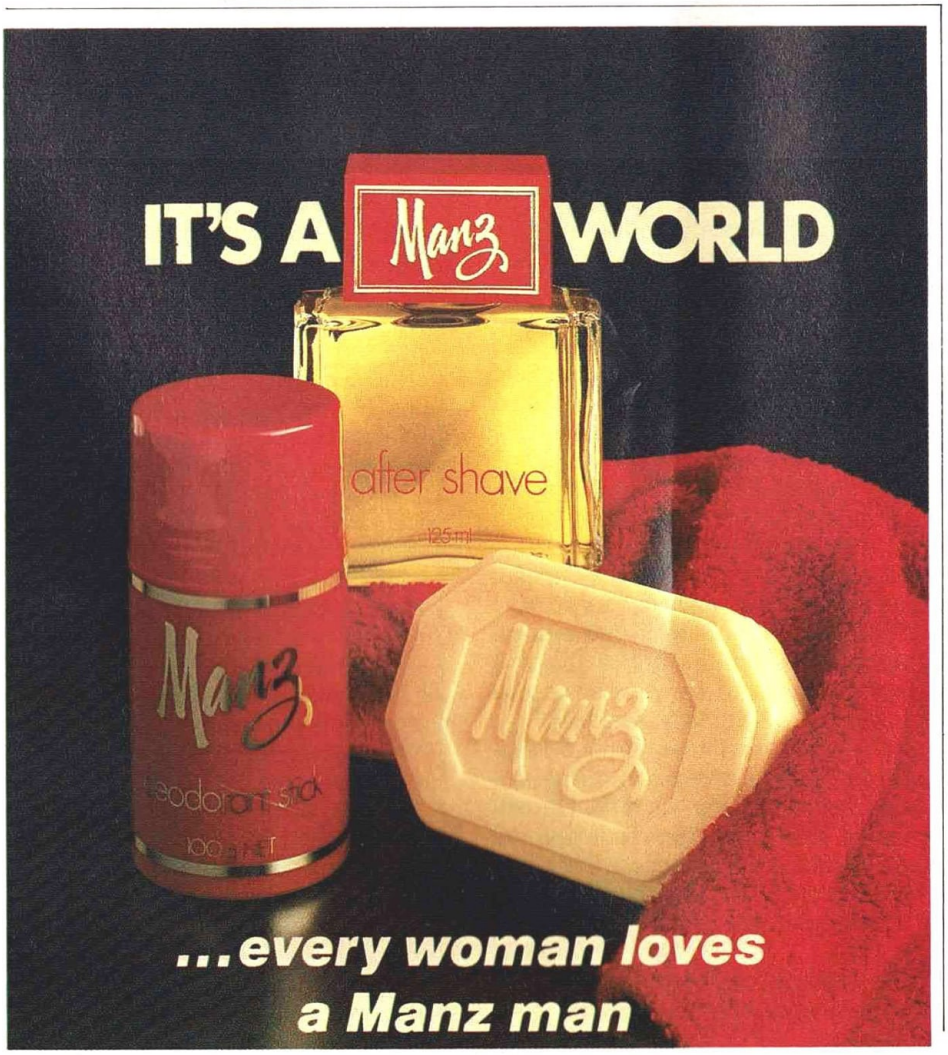
"We still haven't found our chief crazy. How important is this picture to you? Financially, I mean."

"Bloody important. Why?"

"That lets you out as a candidate for the phone caller — that is, if you're not lying."

"Jesus, Hardy, don't joke about it."

"There has to be someone who comes out better if the picture gets stopped, or delayed — who?"



"No-one." Fuller lit a cigarette to help him think. "I lose my shirt; Kurt misses out on a good role, and they're not so easy to come by; McLeish needs a commercial success for obvious reasons; Space wants the credit and he's got points if we go into the black. Also I haven't paid him for the property yet; if we don't make the picture he'll have to join the list of creditors and that'll be long, believe me. The assistant cameraman wants to be cameraman, the wardrobe girl wants to be in casting — everybody wants to move up. Everybody needs *Death Feast*."

People started emerging from all points around the houses like ants coming out of holes. A sharp squeal of brakes outside announced Jardie and Wild's return, and within minutes they were all making up like mad and things were starting to hum. Fuller charged around for a while and then settled down to talk on the phone. I broke resolution again and had a beer from one of the fridges. The security man told me only two other people had left since Wild, and neither was a candidate for star billing. I watched them shoot a scene and saw the sweat dribbling off Butler after the eighth take. Wild was slow and had to be hurried through his lines; Space looked edgy and spoiled one take by making a noise flapping the script. Jardie squatted just out of camera range and offered Butler massive support with her eyes and hands. He lapped it up. I decided I'd rather make the tea than act, write or direct.

Fuller put down the phone and beckoned me over; he was smiling.

"Good news from the distributors," he said.

"Does that mean my cheque won't bounce?"

"You don't know how true you speak. No, everything should be all right now."

"How many people are actually sleeping here, say tonight?"

"Let's see. McLeish, Kurt and Jardie; Roxie and Heathcliff . . ."

"Heathcliff?"

"Heathcliff Hathaway, one of the support actors."

"Will he ever get to be star with a name like Heathcliff?"

"With his talent, anything's possible."

"He's got talent?"

"None. Bob Space tells me he's moved his things in for a bit . . . if you're planning something boring like gathering everyone together for a rap session, it won't work. Not tonight anyway."

"I wasn't, but why wouldn't it work?"

"There's a dinner on tonight at EJs. Everyone's going. What are you planning?"

"Something sneaky," I said.

It's my belief that when you find out someone's secrets, you find out who they are. I went back to Glebe the way homeowners do, to make sure the place hadn't burned down or had the doors stolen — but by 9 pm I was back in Leichhardt wording up the security men to let me poke around for a while.

I did McLeish's caravan first. It bore all the signs of being occupied by a sort of cinematic hitman. He was here to do a job and he'd brought enough clothes and enough money and the booze he could get on the spot. He might have a full life back in the Old Dart, complete with photos of wife and dog, but here he was just passing through. There were some uncomplimentary remarks scrawled on a copy of the script, a bit of correspondence with his agent about fees, and a cupboard full of hangover remedies. His passport photograph was of a younger, more hopeful man.

Jardie Butler had trouble sleeping; she kept her Mogadon close at hand. There was a pile of books by the bed of the kind that poor sleepers flip through — short stories, pop biographies and Woody Allen scripts. There was also an eye mask and a vibrator. The Butlers had a lot of casual clothes and a lot of casual money. Two passbook accounts were healthy, as were a keycard account and a building society deposit. They'd also carelessly left lying around the kind of money I would count, fold and tuck away in my wallet.

> Under his bunk was a locked metal box. I teased it open with a piece of wire and found a book inside

Kurt Butler's effects included weights, running gear, a chest expander, various liniments and more jockstraps than socks. His only reading matter was a carefully kept scrapbook concerning his favorite film actor. He had a copy of Space's script with his own lines heavily underscored. There had been some editing done in Jardie's hand — all to make the speeches shorter.

Space's part of the caravan he shared with one of the technicians was a crazy jumble of books, papers, credit cards and clothes. He seemed to have no ability to keep things in separate compartments: he had pipe tobacco in a cup, ball point pens in a shoe and razor blades in with a packet of tea bags. Under his bunk, though, was a locked metal box. I teased it open with a piece of wire and found a book inside which had been carefully wrapped in tissue paper, as if it was a Shakespeare first folio.

The book was a paperback published 12 years ago by MacRobertson & MacRobertson. It was the first in a mystery and adventure series and I vaguely remembered the fanfare of announcements at the time. Entitled *Death Games*, it was written by Deryck Hyclef and told the story of a private detective who had three clients in succession murdered. It seemed like a faster way to go out of business than the slow grind of the recession. I had my souvenired copy of Bob Space's script in my pocket and I sat down on his bunk and compared the two pieces of writing. Even with names changed (and he hadn't bothered to change them that much — Dirk Balfour becoming Dick Balmain, for example), it was easy to see that *Death Feast* was a direct pinch.

There was no mention of Hyclef on the script. In fact, it was called "an original screenplay." Space had tried a few minor plot changes but, without knowing anything about film editing, it seemed to me that if the cutter of the film wanted a backbone he'd end up with a plot very like that of Hyclef's book. In any case, the book was underlined and annotated in Space's writing. I rummaged in the mess and found an earlier draft of the script which included passages virtually transcribed from *Death Games*. If the Scriptwriter's Guild, of which he was a fully paid up member, had any teeth, Mr Robert Space would have a very bloody neck.

I telephoned EJs to ensure that Fuller would come to the set rather than slope off to his penthouse. Then I got a bottle from McLeish's caravan and the security boys and I had a few belts and swapped security stories. I told them the one about the amusement park that had a ferris wheel stolen and they told me the one about the drunk who went to sleep on wet cement.

Fuller and Space turned up around midnight; the writer was drunk and unsteady and his face seemed to dissolve when I laid the book in front of him. We were in the kitchen of one of the houses and I got him a glass of water. I put the script down beside the book and didn't say anything. Space gulped and looked miserable.

"What's going on?" Fuller said.

"Bob pinched the story from this book. He pinched the characters, the atmosphere, the lot."

"Jesus," Fuller breathed. "Anything to drink besides water?"

We got McLeish's bottle and I poured two drinks, leaving Space with more water.

"Let's hear it, Bob," I said.

Space sipped water and a little dribbled down his chin. He'd been running his hands through his high-rise hair, flattening

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INDIAN GIVER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHEN HICKS

When Hyapatia Lee was a little girl taking piano, ballet and violin lessons and dreaming of being a star, she never thought her firmament would be above a world of X-rated movies. Today she considers her job to be a dream come true. "Making love for a living means never getting bored and having plenty of freedom," she says.

Hyapatia, 23, is of Cherokee Indian extraction, a background that has given her those exotic, darkly sensuous good looks. Despite her perfect silhouette, this siren thinks she's much too short. But she's an incredibly tall order for the men in her life.

Hyapatia says she's not surprised that she has so many fans: "I love sex — whether it's on camera, with my lover or just fooling around with friends. I can't get enough!"

Sometimes, however, Hyapatia's vivid sensuality forces her to resort to her own devices, since she's on the road several months a year, sleeping in strange and lonely hotels.

When the camera is worshipping her, Hyapatia admits she's not in the least bit inhibited." Rehearsals get me pretty worked up if my co-star is doing everything right. When the camera rolls I'm hot to trot." Roll away!

MENACE
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MENACE

Penthouse samples a hot Australian Grand Prix contender

FORMULA MAGIC

BY PETER McKAY

It's that time of the year again — Australian Grand Prix time. And when two dozen helmeted crazies go out to do battle at Melbourne International Raceway on November 11, they'll be chasing more than another trophy for the mantelpiece and some small change for the hip pocket.

The annual AGP always brings out the best, and the worst, in the competitors. The ferocity of the racing is unmatched — it seems that each driver is the possessor of an almost manic desire to add his name to the AGP honor roll.

Reckoned to be the third-oldest GP in the world, the Australian was first held back in 1928 at the old Phillip Island circuit. A bloke named A.C.R. Waite won that inaugural contest, driving a modified example of the ubiquitous Austin 7. Since then some very quick drivers have won the AGP: Lex Davison, Stirling Moss, Jack Brabham, Stan Jones, Bruce McLaren, Jackie Stewart, Graham Hill, Jim Clark, Frank Matich, Alan Jones, Alain Prost . . . nothing shabby about that bunch.

Sophisticated high-tech projectiles like the Ralt RT4 will be raced by most of the 1984 AGP contenders. This is

PHOTOS BY PETER SIMONS

TAKE AWAY THE DECALS, BADGES AND SPEED STRIPES

AND YOU CAN DRIVE THE CAR THAT JUST SET 36 NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SPEED AND ENDURANCE RECORDS.

Y&R Coudrey V798

Take away the racing roll bar and extra driving lamps, and you have virtually the same Volvo 360 GLT you can test drive at your Volvo Dealer today.

A speedster that ran flat out for 24 hours recently at the Surfers Paradise International Raceway.

To its credit the car established no less than 36 best-in-its-class records.

These being 25 for Australia and 11 for the world.

While you might have been looking at other makes of cars on April 24th and 25th, the 360 GLT was blistering the track with very quick 1/4 mile and 1/2 km times.

It coaxed records of endurance out of distances of 500, 1000 and 2000 kilometres.

The 360 GLT also returned 2646.6 kilometres for the 24-hour run.

So it's a car not just with speed, but heart.

Of course, this isn't just a cleverly engineered Volvo ploy to impress you.

The judges of Australia's motor sport controlling body, CAMS, supervised this trial.

They clicked the stopwatches and remained impartial.

Thank you CAMS.

Thank you Hewlett Packard for the "million-dollar array" of computer controlled timing equipment.

Thank you B.B.J. for creating the software package.

Thank you, TAA, for your generous support in Air Travel.

Thank you, Castrol for the quality lubricants.

And thank you to the drivers, Mike Minear and Team.

Now, the day you test drive this 5-speed, 5-door, 2-litre fuel injected wonder you may want to say thanks to your local Volvo Dealer

"Thanks for the experience."

VOLVO 360 GLT

HEWLETT PACKARD TAA. PIRELLI Castrol

HELLA BILSTEIN QUADRANT bbj COMPUTERS MINE MIKE MINEAR RACING

FORMULA

the type of car the likes of international aces Mike Thackwell, Roberto Moreno and Davy Jones will be driving. In fact, Ralts will make up about 90 percent of the grid. And because there is so little difference between the cars, mechanical preparation and driving skill become paramount — which is as it should be.

Ralt is one of the most prolific — and successful — marques in international racing. At last count upwards of 300 RT4s had been pumped out of the Ralt factory in Woking, England, since 1980. Twenty-three have found Australasian addresses.

The Ralts are known as Formula Mondial cars, along with the other brands like Cheetah, Toleman and Tiga. They shouldn't be confused with the bigger, more powerful, and staggeringly expensive grand prix machines. Mondial regulations are framed to wreak less havoc on the competitor's bank account. The teams may use just one type of racing tyre, a hard-wearing Dunlop. The price: $800 per set of four, and that's cheap by usual racing standards. Only one engine is allowed, the 1600cc Ford BDA — virtually half of the old Cosworth 3.0-litre V8 grand prix powerplant. The cost: about $16,000. The Ralts themselves are worth about $35,000 without engine and spares. One hundred grand would be a workable budget for a competitive local Formula Mondial team.

Peter Hopwood has two virtually identical RT4s at his disposal: he races one while the other does silent duty around town. Hopwood is one of the lucky few, a driver who has others paying his bills. Steve Webb is an enthusiastic patron who supplies one car and a transporter, while a male toiletry brand — Menage — has weighed in with some freight to cover expenses. This is Hopwood's first full season in Australia's premier racing car formula, but he has a solid grounding in other formulae. Last year the cool and analytical driver won the Australian Sports Car Championship and before that there was success in such diverse machines as a Lotus Elan and a Chevy Impala. He's no big talker or headline hunter, but the *cognoscenti* know he's a bit of a whiz behind the wheel. Certainly his varied track experience has allowed him to make a relatively smooth transition to the Mondials and he's been placing consistently in the top three or four in Gold Star championship races.

On the surface, cine-photographer Hopwood — now 41 and married with one son — is an unlikely candidate for the madhouse that is Australian Formula One racing. He was an instant convert to "real" race cars after his first tryout in a Ralt. Usually an assured, quietly spoken man, Hopwood's eyes sparkle and his moustache bobs about disconcertingly when he speaks of the thrill of driving Mondials. His enthusiasm exploded into a good-news offer to *Penthouse*. "Come drive my car," he said.

It's a busy week for the Menage team, slap-bang in the middle of two Gold Star races. There was Lakeside in Brisbane last Sunday, and Melbourne is three days away. At Lakeside, a rear suspension breakage at 220 km/h just a lap and a half from the finish pitched the Menage Ralt into a series of alarming spins. Amazingly the car didn't strike anything and Hopwood, in second place at the time, was able to retrieve the situation, carefully easing his crippled car to a very respectable third place. Back in Sydney, the offending component was replaced and a fresh engine bolted in.

Now it's Wednesday and Hopwood has both blue Menage Ralts at Oran Park Raceway. There's the rebuilt engine to be carefully run in at moderate revs before loading the car into a transporter and setting off down the Hume. And Hoppy also wants to give the display car a solid workout, just to clear away the cobwebs and fine tune its handling for upcoming races. *Penthouse* is delegated the task of running-in the engine on the number one car using no more than 6000 revs. It's an exercise that involves slowly driving around and around for about 40 minutes with one eye firmly on the rev counter. Boring stuff for Hopwood, but an interesting experience for a Ralt first-timer.

First, though, is the problem of shoehorning 187 centimetres of trepidation into a space usually occupied by 175 centimetres of race driver. The seat is removed to give Operation Tight Squeeze a sporting chance of success. Then comes the complicated task of threading long legs and big feet into the confines of the cockpit. The fit is tight.

Dials — just three of them — are crammed together on the tiny instrument panel behind the suede-covered Momo wheel. There's water temperature to the left, a tacho in the centre and oil pressure/temperature gauge to the right. That thing there? Don't worry about that . . . it activates the on-board fire extinguisher.

And the big knob? By pulling it in or out the driver adjusts the front anti-roll as conditions change during a race — maybe his tyres have lost some of their effectiveness, or the track has become slippery. The driver can dial-in more, or less, understeer to compensate. Another dashboard mounted control allows the driver to alter his car's braking bias mid-race. It means today's race driver is ideally a thinker and a technician, being required to think more about his car's handling and braking, monitor any changes, and then take steps to rectify errant behavior.

Members of the Menagerie — Hopwood's underpaid, overworked but unswervingly enthusiastic crew — assist in buckling the six-point harness around

Clockwise from above: The Ralt RT4 in action; Peter Hopwood at the wheel; Penthouse writer Peter McKay prepares for test run.

FORMULA

the driver. Foam rubber is jammed between kidneys and the sides of the Ralt's aluminium tub to provide some lateral support.

Set to go: fuel pump on; ignition on. There's no self starter. Clutch in, second gear engaged and a shove from a crewman and the BDA clears its throat and coughs into life . . . This particular engine is what the Mondial mob know as a Jennings; others are tagged Nicholson or Judd, or any one of about six names. They carry the names of the specialist engine-builders who painstakingly pieced them together in search of that elusive couple of horsepower that sets them above the rest. Top mumbo for any of the BDAs is probably 225 horses, while the least powerful of the good engines produces no less than 218 horsepower. But, as every driver is quick to point out, seven horses mean plenty when the cars are equal in most other respects.

Every BDA has different characteristics. The Jennings is an engine that works only at high revs, like between eight and 10 thousand. Anything below 8000 rpm and it splutters like an indignant politician caught with a hand in the taxpayers' cash register. Operating within this narrow rev band is achievable thanks to the wide selection of gear ratios available. The Mondial teams can literally tailor their gearboxes to suit nearly every corner on any given circuit.

Though such precision is not required for the running-in procedure on the number one car, Hopwood calls for changes to the cogs in the back-up machine while, out on the track, *Penthouse* continues to plod about, the engine slowly freeing up as the laps jerkily roll by. Even at a maximum speed of maybe 160 km/h the car feels beautifully taut. Springing is rock hard by conventional family car standards; in fact the coil springs are three times firmer than those on, say, a Holden Commodore.

Steering is deadly — Half a turn is all that is required to negotiate the twists of Oran Park — while gearshifting is sensational. A flick using just two fingers and the thumb . . . a split-second, and it's done. The clutch is also a rapid-fire job; it covers four centimetres at most.

Crew chief Neil Stephens finally waves *Penthouse* into pit lane for a car switch. Hopwood is going to give the now-ready number one Ralt a thorough shakedown run; *Penthouse* is handed the second car and invited to discover Formula Mondial behavior with 9000 revs to play with.

Hopwood hands out some advice: "Watch out for the puddles on the track. Avoid them if you can. If you spin it, jump on the brakes. Don't be afraid of flat-spotting the tyres . . . that's preferable to hitting something. Don't dawdle with the gear changes — the faster the better. Stay away from the curbs; these cars don't like being bounced about. Have fun."

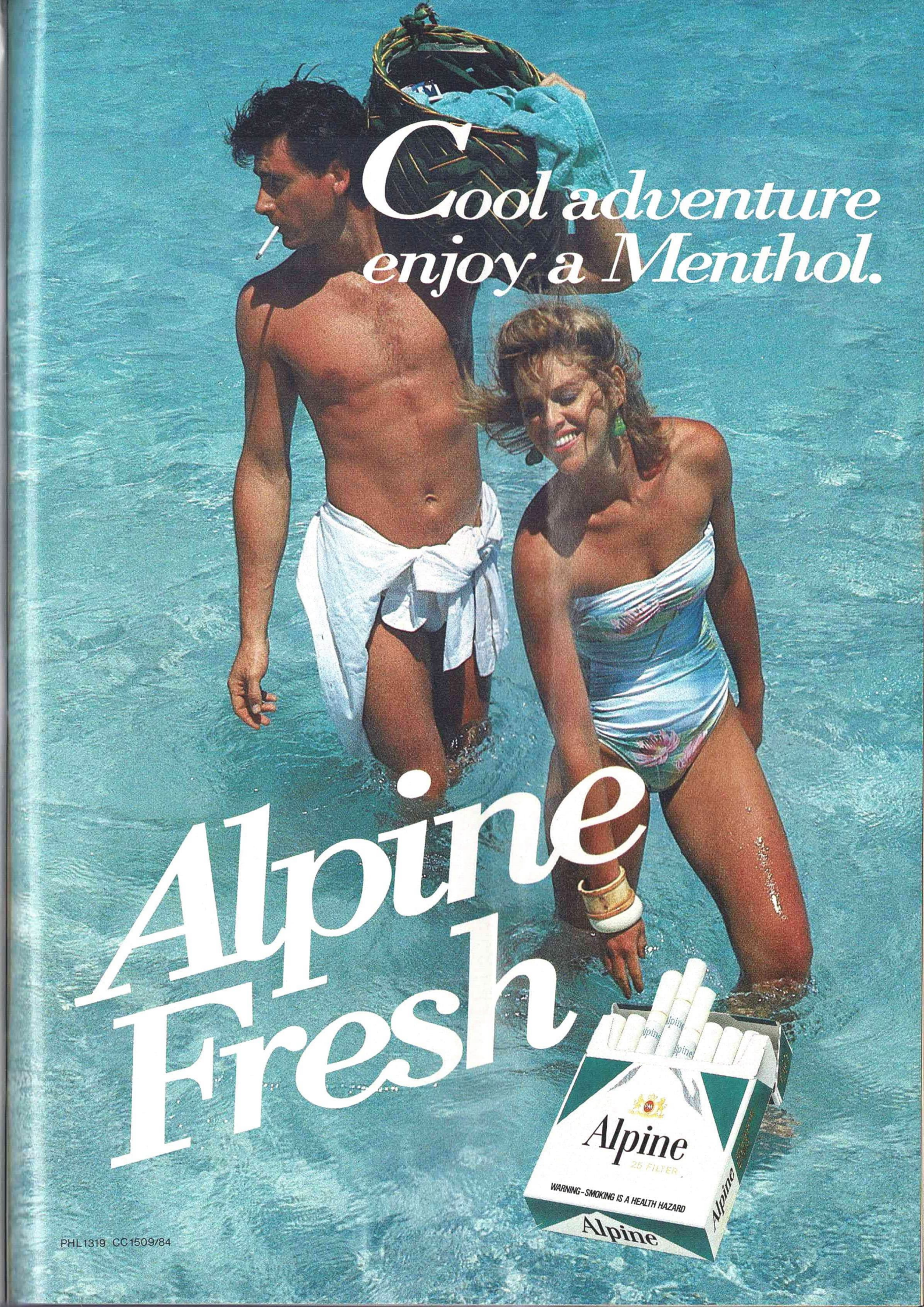
When Hopwood first drove a Ralt, he was left awestruck by its amazing braking and cornering abilities. Any motorist accustomed to the stopping and handling of even a fine road car — maybe a Porsche or Ferrari — is in no way conditioned for Formula Mondial levels. A race driver with a touring car background would need to slowly bring himself to accept the eye-popping late braking and neck-straining high G-force cornering speeds that are the Mondial norm.

The braking excellence is mainly due to the car's weight — a mere 476 kilos — along with its relatively large all-disc system. The incredible cornering comes courtesy of downforce or, as the grand prix technocrats christened it, ground effect. Discovered and first used by the late grand prix genius, Colin Chapman of Lotus, it's the science of producing a race car design that works like an aeroplane wing . . . but in reverse. The car is actually sucked to the track and the faster it goes, the better the downforce. The modern Mondial racer, of which the Ralt RT4 is an example, can sweep through bends at speeds only dreamed of 10 years ago.

Penthouse's practical appreciation of ground effect is still to be realised. A still-damp Oran Park is not the place to discover personal limits at the wheel of someone else's highly prized and very expensive property. However, the dramatic braking capabilities of the Ralt can be explored without terrifying driver or onlookers, or endangering the machine. From 200 km/h-plus at the end of Oran Park's main straight, the brakes are firmly employed at a point *Penthouse* regards as approaching desperation. Deep breath, last chance stuff. Outcome: the car acts like it's caught in an invisible net. It slows down too quickly, too soon. Ridiculously, the driver has to move his right foot back on to the loud pedal and accelerate up to the corner. Crazy and bewildering.

The Ralt's amazing retardation powers is best illustrated by Hopwood's enthusiastic description: "You blast up to a corner with foot hard on the throttle and keep going way past the point where you figure you should be braking. And you keep going. And just before you turn into the corner, and only then, you brake. Jump on 'em any earlier and a couple of cars will whiz by."

Formula Magic.



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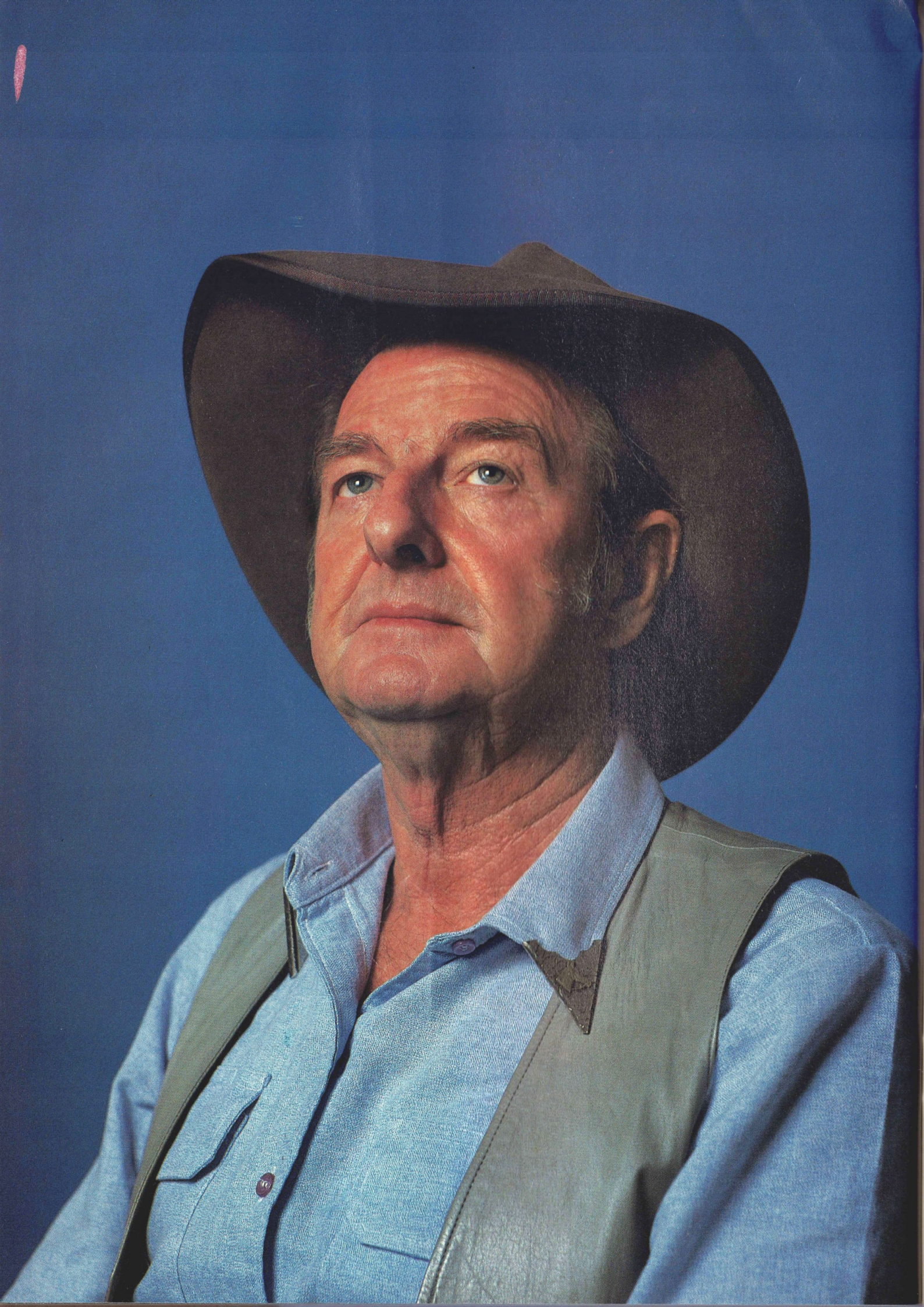


SLIM DUSTY

"Maybe my fans know deep down that they'll never get back to the country, but through some of my songs they like to dream of returning to that life"

From Victoria's Gippsland, through NSW and western Queensland, into the Territory and down through WA and South Australia, everyone knows Slim Dusty. For 30 years Slim and his Travelling Country Band have been touring Australia, becoming as identifiably a part of the landscape as Ayers Rock or the Gibson Desert. He's played everywhere from small Aboriginal settlements around the Gulf of Carpentaria to the Sydney Opera House. The reaction from his audiences is always the same — wild enthusiasm for the music, and affection bordering on adoration for the man.

Slim Dusty has sold more records in this country than any other Australian performer, collected scores of gold record awards and a shelf full of Golden Guitars from the Tamworth Country Music Festival, for 11 years the Oscars of Australian country music. And that's exactly what he originally set out to do.

Born in 1927 into a dairy farming family from Nulla Nulla Creek, northern NSW as David Gordon Kirkpatrick, he decided at a very early stage to be a country music singing star. At the age of 11 he changed his name to Slim Dusty, bought a second hand guitar for 30 bob, and set about writing songs. At first they were imitations of the American country music he'd heard on the radio. But he soon abandoned America to write songs about rural Australia, the Australia that the inhabitants of the seaboard capitals seldom see. And, in the tradition of Lawson and Patterson, he called what he wrote "bush ballads."

Slim set out on mammoth around-Australia tours, often in nothing more elaborate than a battered sedan and a caravan, playing shows in work-camps and cattle stations where the usual entertainment was a bottle and a blue. He became a legend in the outback, long before he was ever a familiar name to city dwellers. And along the way he founded something of an Australian country music dynasty.

In 1951 he married Joy McKean, one half of the Yodelling McKean Sisters, and already an established writer and singer of Australian country music. By the time they had embarked on their first tour they had a daughter, Anne, who grew up backstage in the most remote places in Australia. Now known as Anne Kirkpatrick, she is a respected country-rock singer in her own right. Slim and Joy's other offspring, David, is a guitar player who dabbles in country and rock when he isn't practising medicine in Perth.

Then there are the songs — which come from the pens of both Slim and Joy. Slim's "When The Rain Tumbles Down In July" was one of the earliest country songs to deal with an Australian subject. Joy's "Lights On The Hill" became one of Slim's biggest hits, and has become something of an Australian country standard. Oddly, the song for which Slim is most known — the perennial "Pub With No Beer" — isn't one of his own. That was written by his old mate Gordon Parsons.

Slim Dusty writes about truckies, stockmen, farmers, miners and just about everyone who inhabits those vast areas away from the coastal fringes of Australia. And he keeps touring the outback, on the simple assumption that if he isn't out there he wouldn't be able to write about the places and the people who live there. His touring schedule is such that the *Penthouse* interview was a project that took more than a year to organise. Slim was always "on the road" somewhere, and it always seemed that it would be a long time before he would be back.

But Slim eventually made it back to the big smoke to promote the movie about his life made by producer Kent Chadwick, and *Penthouse* contributor Roger Crosthwaite trapped him in a room long enough to record the following interview. Crosthwaite found Slim to be a quiet, almost shy man, his only trappings of stardom a heavy silver ring and a brass "Country Music" belt buckle. Although ambitious in his chosen field, Slim proved to be equally determined to make sure his kids got a good education and his audiences got a fair go.

Some call him "The Man Who Is Australia", but Slim Dusty is more just a bloke doing what he does best and that happens to be country music, and he does it bloody well.

PHOTO BY PETER SIMONS

INTERVIEW

Penthouse: How did an 11-year-old boy called David Gordon Kirkpatrick ever invent a character called Slim Dusty?
Slim: I think it was the fascination of the old cowboy songs of that era, and the fact that all the singers had western names. Kids in every era have dreams. When you're that age you think you're going to take the world by storm and be a famous general or something else that fits in with your era. For me it was the country singers — and all of them had cowboy names. I suppose Slim Dusty is a strange name in some ways. I was a fairly lean kid, so I guess that's why I called myself Slim, and the Dusty part had to do with Australia, you know, the dusty country. But I was lucky I chose well because Slim Dusty rolls off the tongue pretty easily. And it looks good in print. When I was in New Guinea many years ago the natives couldn't read English but they knew what the name Slim Dusty looked like.
Penthouse: But it was more than just a name, it was a whole cowboy character you invented . . .
Slim: Just about. We've still got the original photos mum took of me when I was about 11, and scribbled across the bottom in pencil are the words Slim Dusty. That probably would have been the first time I ever wrote that name.
Penthouse: At that time I suppose it would have been all American country music you were listening to?
Slim: Yeah. There were singers like Jimmy Rodgers, the father of country music as we know it — I think he died around 1933. His records were still very popular. And then you had Gene Autrey, who was singing in much the same vein. There was Carson Robinson, and a New Zealander called Tex Morton who was becoming fairly well known, a Canadian singer called Wilf Carter . . . and all their names had this western flavor.
Penthouse: There wasn't much homegrown Australian country music around then, was there ?
Slim: Tex was the closest. He was a bit of a mixture, but he sang a few Australian ballads. But no, there wasn't much around. It seemed a natural thing to me, so I started writing verse about the same time as I invented Slim Dusty. I wrote one song — the first I ever wrote I think — called "How The Cowboy Dies", which was full of American names and imagery. But very quickly I just naturally started to write songs about the western plains and funny things that happened up and down the valley to the neighboring farmers we knew. So I started writing about Australia straight away.
Penthouse: How old were you when you wrote "When The Rain Tumbles Down In July"?
Slim: About 18, I guess. That was the forerunner of what I was going to call my stuff — bush ballads. And bush ballads had been around for a while. All the old Banjo Patterson and Henry Lawson poems are bush ballads, the only difference is that I was singing mine whereas they recited theirs. And then over the years I ended up setting a lot of their stuff to music. I set "The Man From Snowy River" to music. But for a long time I wasn't sure what I was going to call my style — they were just songs about Australia. And then one day in a write-up about one of my songs somebody said, "Slim Dusty sings a typical bush ballad," and that sort of told the story.
Penthouse: How about that glamor image of the cowboy singers — did you get into that as well?

> For a long time I wasn't sure what I was going to call my style. They were just songs about Australia

Slim: Well, I had a schoolmate called Shorty Ranger — that was the name he chose for himself — and we had a lot of these dreams together. I had a Tex Morton shirt, which I'd bought from a neighbor, and we made our own fancy western-type belts. Oh yes, we were right into it. First off I had an American-style rolled hat. But as a youngster I had a pretty round face, and I discovered that the rolled up hat accentuated the roundness. So I got myself an old farm hat, with the turned down brim in front, because I thought it looked better on me than the American ones. That's how the whole thing with the hat started.
Penthouse: You came from a hard-working farming family — was there ever any conflict about you learning to play the guitar and making a living out of music?
Slim: Not really. I lived a pretty normal life for a bush kid. In those days if you lived beyond the three-mile limit from the local school you could leave fairly early — and I couldn't leave school quick enough. I only went to fourth class. So I did my normal work around the farm during the day, and played the guitar at night. Our next door neighbor had a guitar that he'd ordered from Sydney through a mail order catalogue, and I bought that from him for 30 shillings. That's what I learnt to play on. Basically I taught myself from the old 78 rpm gramophone records. I used that guitar on the first radio shows I did at 2KM Kempsey.
Penthouse: What was the station like then?
Slim: Well, it was just a glass shopfront with an office, and behind that was the studio where they also stored the records. Kempsey was about 50 miles away from the valley and Shorty and I eventually went down there when we reckoned we were good enough. We made two attempts to approach the radio station, and more or less chickened out both times. But the second time there was a chap called Rex Morrisby — dead now, God rest him. He came storming out wondering what these kids were up to, walking up and down and peering in the window, but not coming in. Anyway, he wanted to know what we could do and what we could sing. He said that if we reckoned we were good enough there was only one way to prove it, and that was to come in and audition. So we auditioned and after a couple of days he put us on the air on a kids' program. From that we went to a Sunday morning request program — they were always popular in the country — and that turned out to be our big break.
Penthouse: So you were singing on the radio shows before you ever stood up in front of an audience?
Slim: Before long Rex organised for us to perform at the local theatre at interval, and Shorty and I started making trips around the countryside trying to get jobs in theatres. But, yeah, it was the radio where I got my start. And before long we'd built up a pretty good following.
Penthouse: How did your family feel about having a radio star for a son?
Slim: Dad was very interested in the singing. Being of Irish descent, he was always recognised as being a pretty good singer in the valley. He used to make up parodies and sing them at get-togethers. So he was very enthusiastic about the whole idea, and eventually got together with Rex to decide what I should do next. The dream very early in the piece was to make a commercial recording, and there was only one record company in Australia then, the Columbia Gramophone Company. It was all out at Homebush . . . studio, factory, everything. So Rex and dad decided that I should go down for the audition. Dad took me down to Sydney, where I auditioned for the repertoire manager Archie Kerr. Well, he had the

first, middle and last say, and he told me to keep improving my playing and singing but they weren't recording anybody new then. This was still the war years and people like Tex Morton, Peter Dawson and Gladys Moncreif were recording, although nobody new. But Archie did say I should keep spreading my name around, and that if I wanted to I could make what they called a process record. They would record you and sell you 25 copies of your record for a pound a copy. That was back in 1943, and in those days it was a fair amount for dad to fork out after bringing me to Sydney and not really getting anywhere with the audition. But he was still keen, so we paid for one record, called "A Song For The Aussies", and took them home.

I had all the front in the world — I bundled the records up and sent them to radio stations that I knew had hillbilly programs on. And between then and 1945 I went to Sydney three or four times, and got knocked back each time, but each time I'd make another process record. I finished up making five of those, so that was 10 songs I had floating around radio stations.

Penthouse: I heard that you set yourself up quite a little operation for a country kid.

Slim: Yeah. I bought myself a typewriter and set up a little office in the farmhouse. I started answering the fan-mail that was coming in, and I called the farm "Melody Ranch." I sent the records down to Victoria and all around NSW. And I had photos printed . . . I went into the *Macleay Argus* newpaper and had a songbook printed up.

Penthouse: This was all very industrious for a kid of 16.

Slim: Yeah, I suppose it was. But as a kid you think nothing of it — you just push along and do it.

Penthouse: Things changed for you quite dramatically around the end of the war, didn't they?

Slim: Yes, it was very sad. Dad died in 1945, and then in 1946 I was invited down to Sydney by EMI to audition. I ended up recording six sides for them — one of them was "When The Rain Tumbles Down In July." But with dad gone I was still tied to the farm. I went back to Sydney the following year and did another session, but it was still back and forth to the farm until I was over 21.

I came to Sydney full time with Shorty in the early Fifties, because we'd heard that Tim McNamara had quite a following on 2SM, with concerts and so on. There was quite a revival of country music around Sydney and the suburbs so I did a lot of work with Tim and the boys. That's where I met the McKean sisters, Heather and Joy. But all through that period I kept recording, because I thought it was important to keep the records coming.

Penthouse: You did a bit of work outside music during those years too?

Slim: We did all sorts of things. We were professional gardeners, plasterers . . . but we weren't looking to make a career in that sort of thing. The singing was always in the back of our minds.

Penthouse: When did you set off on your first country tour?

Slim: That would have 1954. Joy and I had got married and built a home. I was in the building trade then — I'd got my ticket as a fibrous plasterer. Anyway, we thought we'd go out for three months, just to try the idea out. We had one car, an old '38 Ford, a caravan, and a bit of a lean-to tent for the boys. We didn't have much money in our pockets, about 19 pounds. We opened in Maitland (NSW), went to Buladelah and up the coast as far as Toowoomba, and then came back down through the New England area. And that took three months, so you can imagine how many small places we played in. The caravan was handy because Anne was about two at the time. The rest of the crew was Barry Thornton, who did a bit of comedy and became my lead guitar player, a rope-spinner called Larry Mason and Joy's brother on a motorbike as our advance man. That was it.

> "Rock and roll was all the thing with Bill Haley and Elvis Presley, and I came through with "Pub With No Beer"

Penthouse: It must have been pretty rough travelling then.

Slim: Yeah. Once you left Newcastle you were on dirt roads all the way, and it had been a wet year so we were always getting bogged. But get bogged or not — we'd always seemed to make it to the show. Well, we did that three month trip and came back to Sydney and made plans to do it full-time. We were joined at some time by a young bloke called Johnny Ashcroft. When we went out again we went to Melbourne — and starved. The rivalry between Sydney and Melbourne was pretty fierce then, so fierce in fact that we were considering calling ourselves the Queensland Country Show to hide the fact that we were from NSW.

We did everything wrong that year. We went south in the winter and north in the summer, which showed pretty lousy planning. But there were very few people on the road those days so you had to find out these things for yourself. We went out to western Queensland across the black soil plains, where there were a lot of storms and again we were always getting bogged. We got back to Sydney at the end of that year, and it hadn't been a real good one, but we still thought of pushing on. It was good fun, because we were young and caravans were a novelty to us. Caravan parks were a rarity and motels unheard of then, so we were camping out all the time. It could be very pleasant.

Penthouse: It must have been a bit difficult with a two-year-old daughter on the road.

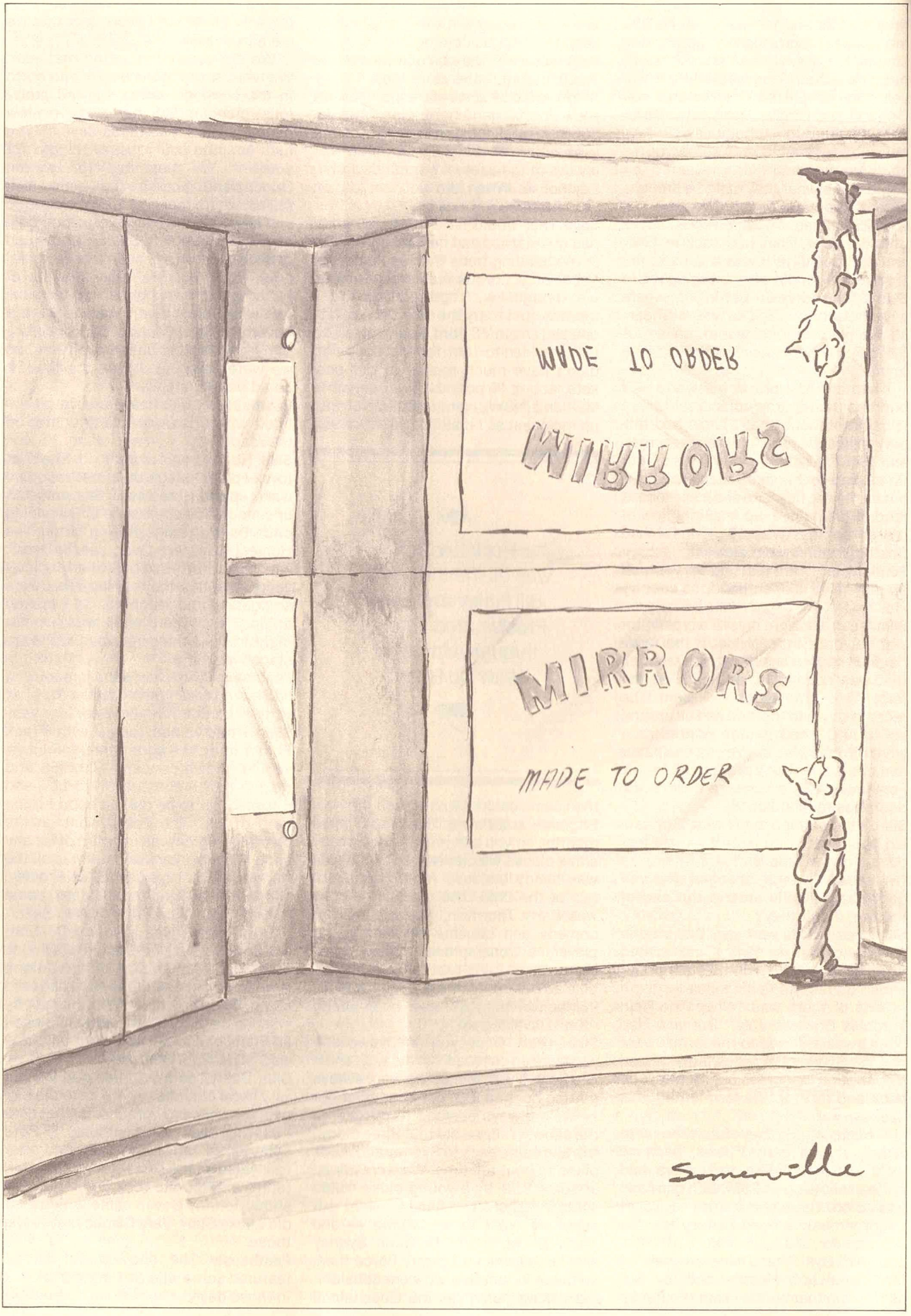
Slim: No, Ann was a great kid. She'd go to sleep backstage on a mattress and wake up after the show. She made an unscheduled appearance in Buladelah once. I was on stage playing "When The Harvest Days Are Over, Jessie Dear", which is a pretty sad old ballad; it didn't seem right that the first few rows were sniggering and laughing. So I looked around and there she was in her nightdress, looking up at dad. Quite upstaged me.

Penthouse: And a few years later on you had a big break when Gordon Parsons write "The Pub With No Beer" for you.

Slim: I had joined forces with Frank Foster to do the agricultural circuit — all the showgrounds — in 1956 and then in 1957 I recorded "The Pub", and it turned out to be quite a boon for the both of us. "The Pub" went on the charts — which was unheard of for any song like that. Rock and roll was all the thing with Bill Haley and Elvis Presley, and then in the middle of all that I came through with "The Pub With No Beer."

Bob Rogers was a young DJ from Queensland and he started playing it on the radio, but all the other stations were reluctant to put it to air. It had sold about 50,000 copies before anybody else would play it in the cities. So soon all Frank had to put up on our billboard was "The Pub With No Beer Man — Slim Dusty" and we'd sell out. We did very good business — we were the biggest on every showground. By that time I was into flash cars; I had a big '57 Ford painted red, white and blue. And after four years on the showgrounds we started to incorporate rock and roll in the show. Johnny Devlin came with us, so did Lucky Starr. Very flamboyant years, those.

Penthouse: The showground circuit featured some wild and wonderful acts in those days.


MADE TO ORDER
MIRRORS
MIRRORS
MADE TO ORDER
Somerville

INTERVIEW

Slim: We had Samson the Strongman, and Lloyd Nan who was billed as the fourth best juggler in the world, usherettes in cowgirl outfits . . . all sorts of things. We used to do 20 or 30 shows a day in the big cities, and I'd do three songs a show. Of course I had to do "The Pub" every time. I've been asked how many times I've sung it, but I just wouldn't know — it's been a lot of times. I still like it though.

Penthouse: That raises an interesting question. What is country music? Can a country song be about anything at all? And do you have to be from the country to sing country?

Slim: You get country singers coming from the cities these days. But certainly back in my day they mostly came from the country. In my case all my stuff is pretty rural-flavored, whereas the American country song today are basically pop with country-flavored music in the background. They don't write so much about the rural subjects. Yeah, I think that's the essence of it. Through living in the country you create songs with that rural feeling, and a lot of our Australian country songs still reflect that. But you're starting to get a lot of country singers from the cities now. I think the gap between the country and the city is very small, compared to the old days.

They talk about the railways and the roads opening up the country, but I don't think anything has opened it up like the plane. And so many country people have their own planes now. So all the country areas are pretty "with it" as the saying goes.

Penthouse: Television was pretty disastrous for the tent show people wasn't it?

Slim: It killed everything. Theatres, restaurants, dry-cleaners . . .

Penthouse: Dry-cleaners?

Slim: Yeah. The theory was that people just weren't going out anymore so they didn't have their good clothes dry-cleaned. Anyway, an old friend of mine, a fellow who called himself Buffalo Bill, said to go over to Western Australia and start an around-Australia trip while all this was settling down, and that's what I did. I went around Australia for a few years. We were on the road seven, eight, nine months of the year for three or four years. We'd leave after Christmas, put the kids into boarding school, and wouldn't be back until the following Christmas. We really got to see a lot of Australia.

Penthouse: That must have been an eye-opener, coming from lush northern NSW and heading into the outback.

Slim: It was good experience. At that stage we had two trucks, "Thunder" and "Lightning" we called them, and we carried our own lighting plant, about 250 folding chairs and sidewalls if we needed them. So we could put on a show anywhere — and we did. Fitzroy Crossing and places like that, we'd set up and go to it. They were very good years. Once again, we were doing something new, something different. There had been some shows through there before us, but not many. We covered about 35,000 miles or more each trip.

Penthouse: What were the audiences like out there?

Slim: Good, but they could be pretty rough. I recall doing a show at Top Springs when the roadworkers and the ringers decided to go for each other. They had some sort of animosity going, and they decided to work the bad blood out of their systems there and then. Luckily none of them paid much attention to us, so we were okay. Yeah, she was a good brawl that one. But mostly the audiences were pretty easy-going. You'd get the odd fellas with a bit too much drink in them and so forth. In most cases though you were singing about places these people knew, and singing about the sort of people they were themselves, so it would go down pretty well. We got by all right.

> We like to meet the people afterwards. We go out, sign records, have a chat, whatever. It keeps you in touch

Penthouse: Do you have a lot of feedback from your audiences. Is there much personal contact between you and your fans?

Slim: Yes there is. I've heard it said by some of the American artists that all you owe to your audience is a good performance. Well, maybe that's all they can do over there with their audiences of thousands and thousands. They do their show, pack up and leave; otherwise they'd get trampled to death I suppose. But out here we meet the people afterwards. We go out, sign records, have a chat, whatever. And you can get a pretty reliable vibe from them: whether they enjoyed your last record, or whether they thought it wasn't as good as previous ones. They'll say, "How about another trucking album?" or "What about a few more songs about the drought?" It keeps you in touch, and that's very important.

Penthouse: Is that why you keep doing the long tours?

Slim: We just like to be out there. Often when Joy and I aren't touring professionally we'll still go for a trip. It's a good situation, because it's important to tour to meet the people, and we still enjoy doing it.

Penthouse: You've made visits to places like New Zealand, New Guinea and the Solomons, but have you ever had the urge to go to America, which is the home of country music?

Slim: It's a strange situation. It's been a way of life for us here, we've put both our kids through boarding school, and we've had to keep travelling to pay for all this so there's never really been the time to go overseas. We've been quite busy around the home traps. I've met some of the American singers — Tom T. Hall, Johnny Cash on one of his very early tours out here — and they've been very friendly and asked why don't I go over there. But if I went over there to record I'd be defeating the purpose I've tried to establish out here. I'm essentially Australian, and the young boys out here are such good musicians, because they've grown up with the music around them.

Penthouse: Are the old characters, the type who crop up in your songs, disappearing from the outback?

Slim: Well, there's nothing as constant as change. The old personalities, the old characters, they're definitely going. But there's a new breed of characters coming up, and soon they'll be the old characters.

Penthouse: What was your reaction when Kent Chadwick approached you to make a movie about your life?

Slim: We weren't very helpful at first, because we had been approached a few times over the years with some pretty crackpot ideas. Kent first came up to us in Cairns about three and a half years ago, and we said more or less "So what?" But then we were heading out to western Queensland for a tour and he came with us, and kept at it. By the time we got to Alice he'd just about convinced us that he had a good plan. So it developed from there, and we've become very good friends.

Penthouse: What was it like for you to watch them reconstruct your life?

Slim: A bit strange. We went back to Melbourne with them to watch them do the drama scenes, the wedding scenes and so on. It feels like I've lived it all twice now.

Penthouse: Now that you've seen it, how do you feel about the movie?

Slim: I think it's a pretty good rep-

resentation of what we do. It basically follows the 1983 tour of the travelling country band, with a few dramatic reconstructions of my life inserted, so it gives people an idea of what we're all about.

Penthouse: In the movie the whole family is featured — not only you and Joy, but Ann and David as well. Was there any ever pressure for your children to get into the country scene?

Slim: No. We let them find their own source of music. I recorded a couple of singles with Ann when she was young, just as a novelty thing — father and daughter — and I did the same with David. But when Ann went off to uni she got tangled up in the folk scene. And David played with rock bands during his uni days, so they both did their own thing.

Penthouse: It must have been a big night for the family when you, Joy and Ann all won awards at Tamworth.

Slim: Yes, that was a big year — a good year. We were very proud.

Penthouse: Is there any difference your city audiences and their country counterparts?

Slim: If they're country music fans it makes very little difference. It's very basic. There's slight differences — some outback areas are keen on rodeo songs, other areas prefer other songs, but the fans are much the same all over. We get just as good a response playing in the Sydney Opera House as in the bush.

Penthouse: To many city people you must seem a new and strange phenomenon.

Slim: I don't know. With the migration from the country to the cities a lot of people that come to the city shows are probably country folks that haven't seen me for a long time, so it works out pretty well. Besides being a novelty to the city people, I've got my old fans to fall back on.

Penthouse: Is the migration to the cities detrimental for Australia? Have you noticed any changes in the country?

Slim: In some country towns we've noticed the population has dropped dramatically. They've been through bad years of drought and the economic situation has affected them. The towns are a lot quieter, that's for sure. Let's hope there can be a migration back to the country sometime. I think a lot of people feel that way. They get it from some of the songs I do. Maybe they know deep down they'll never get back to the country but they like to dream that some day they will get back to that life.

Penthouse: You went back. A few years ago you went back to Nulla Nulla.

Slim: Yeah, to bring back a few memories. It used to be closely settled; now there's just a few homes there — mostly big cattle-runs.

Penthouse: Any thoughts about what life would have been like if you had stayed in the valley?

Slim: It's hard to say. I suppose I'd still be there, as many others are.

Penthouse: The following you've built up since those first shows at 2KM is probably the largest home-grown following of any Australian entertainer. Does it ever get a bit overwhelming when you think about it?

Slim: As the years have gone by there's definitely become more pressure. In the old days we toured with a much smaller show. We went on long tours, around-Australia tours, but they were slower, more leisurely paced. The pressure started to build up when we had a hit with "The Lights On The Hill", which Joy wrote. After that we started to do national tours every two years, playing in the major cities more often. When I look back on it now, that was a turning point.

> "If I ever went to America to record I'd be defeating the purpose I've tried to establish here. I'm essentially Australian"

Penthouse: What about your fans? Are they generally respectful of your privacy?

Slim: Of course there's always the odd case where somebody goes a bit far, but in general they've been very good that way.

Penthouse: Sometimes it seems that the adoration accorded an entertainer is out of proportion with what he actually does. Do you see it that way?

Slim: That's right. I quite agree with you. I think a certain image builds up in people's minds: what you are, what you do, what you've done. And you have to be very careful yourself that you know who you are, and keep level-headed about it all. You've got to keep your feet on the ground.

Penthouse: Do you think you've managed to do that?

Slim: You can get carried away in the excitement of it all, and on occasions that's happened to me. I think it's a sensible idea when the show's finished that you take that image off and sit down and relax; leave it behind you.

Penthouse: For many years yours has been the face of Australian country music, but the music is changing. There's the new "outlaw" style of country with stars like Dave Allan Coe, Waylon Jennings and Hank Williams Jnr. Do you think that sort of stuff has a place in country music in Australia?

Slim: Definitely. When I listen to music I like to hear someone who's a little different. I'm not so keen on tailored Nashville stuff. Naturally I'm interested in the ballad singers, like Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard and Tom T. Hall, but I'm quite interested in Willie Nelson and I've got quite a lot of records of Dave Allan Coe. Their music is very interesting, whereas some of the tinsel-coated Nashville stuff is pretty predictable.

Penthouse: The "outlaws" have changed that wholesome family image that country has worn for many years.

Slim: It's getting away from that, yeah. They are certainly giving it a new injection of life, and any sort of music needs that sometimes. What I like about the young groups is that they're doing it their own way. In Australia we've got groups like Bullamakanka, The Bushwackers, Redgum and others putting a strong injection of Australia into the music.

If I was a young artist starting out now I'd certainly be a different Slim Dusty to what I am now. I think it's a pretty healthy scene.

Penthouse: Do you see yourself, with your knowledge and experience of the outback, having something to say about issues such as Aboriginal land rights?

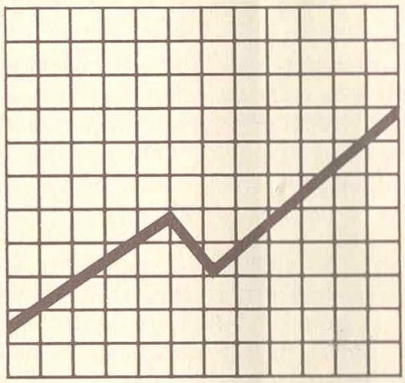
Slim: I tend to take a back seat. I think the powers that be and the people debating the issue are doing the best they can. I think I can do my best for the Aborigines by doing what I do, that is writing songs about them. I seem to have a very good rapport with them; we never look at each other as being different and I think they feel that. I'll continue to do what I do, rather than get involved on either side politically.

Penthouse: What topics are going to be important in Australian country music over the next few years?

Slim: It's whatever takes your fancy. I think it's important to sing about subjects that are topical, like land rights and saving rain forests and those sorts of things, and then it's important to sing about our modern day pioneers, people out there still opening up new territories and new ideas. It's still important to write and sing about stockmen and the bush, but also to sing about what Australians are doing in the Eighties and into the future.

PENTHOUSE PSYCHOGRAPH

DO YOU ATTRACT WOMEN?



If you are the latest pasty-faced rock idol or a famous actor with soulful eyes, you already know that women like you. That's because they are always coming up to you on the street and offering to do exotic things with your body.

But what about the rest of us? During the past week only two women accosted me on the street. One wanted directions to the station; the other did indeed suggest a peripherally exotic activity, but she wanted $50 for it. And there was something in the way she asked, "Hey, honey, you wanna have a good time?" that indicated she wasn't all that fond of me.

No. Finding out if women like you is not the easiest task. Of course, you can always *ask* them, but that's unlikely to be viewed as a suave move on your part. A better alternative might be to take this quiz.

1. When you first meet a woman do you
   (a) talk primarily about yourself?
   (b) construct the conversation so that she is encouraged to talk about herself?

2. During sex do you feel that a woman should achieve orgasm at the same time you do?
   (a) yes
   (b) no

3. On first meeting a woman are you most likely to sit
   (a) opposite her?
   (b) beside her?

4. Do you feel that women won't like you if you come too fast with them?
   (a) yes
   (b) no

5. You've just met a nice lady at a party. Now you're going to impress her with your great sense of humor. Should the fall guy in your jokes be
   (a) yourself (a la Woody Allen)?
   (b) her?
   (c) some other third party?

6. When you take a woman out to dinner or the theatre, do you view the gesture as
   (a) an enjoyable thing in itself — a sociable way to spend the evening?
   (b) payment for the sex that is likely to follow?

7. Do you like touching the "non-sexual" parts of a woman's body, cuddling and sexual play that doesn't lead to intercourse?
   (a) yes
   (b) no

8. "There's no need to worry about my physical appearance. If I'm too well groomed, women will assume I'm gay. Besides, women can pierce through external things and sense my good qualities." Does this statement reflect your own beliefs?
   (a) yes
   (b) no

9. "Women I work with are less likely to find me attractive than those who have never met me before. The women who see me every day know all my bad points." Do you
   (a) agree?
   (b) disagree with these sentiments?

10. Let's get a bit clinical. When you're engaged in sex with a woman, are you more likely to give her pleasure by
    (a) massaging the region around her clitoris?
    (b) massaging the clitoris directly?

11. Women historically have understood the value of playing hard to get. As a man, have you ever used this technique yourself?
    (a) yes
    (b) no

12. Do you tell dirty jokes to
    (a) most women you meet?
    (b) only women with large breasts?
    (c) only women with small breasts?
    (d) virtually no women, because as a rule they don't like risque humor?

13. When you're having sex with a woman for the first time, it's best to
    (a) ask what techniques she'd like you to employ?
    (b) go ahead and do what you think she might like and see how she reacts?

14. Do you fall asleep immediately after having sex?
    (a) yes
    (b) no

15. Do you view sex
    (a) as a form of communication between two people?
    (b) simply as a way of getting your rocks off?

THE ANSWERS AND WHAT THEY INDICATE ABOUT YOUR POPULARITY

1. (b) When a man first meets a woman, he has a tendency to talk about himself. It's kind of a macho ritual: he spews out his opinions with abandon and lists his "assets" (job, car, apartment, collection of erotic etchings) in an attempt to impress the lady. Research indicates that you should probably be doing just the opposite if you want a woman to be attracted to you. Shut up. Women are more likely to be attracted to men who let the women talk about themselves.

2. (b) Several studies have shown that

women feel men are too hung up about mutual orgasm. In reality, only about 30 percent of all women have orgasms during the period of actual penile-vaginal intercourse. Most tend to achieve orgasm more easily *before* the man enters them and are likely to be attracted to the man who realises the need for adapting to their sexual styles.

3. (a) You wouldn't expect where you sit to have much impact on your relationship with a woman, but it does. Recent research shows that women dislike having their personal space "invaded" from the side but don't mind when someone sits opposite them.

4. (b) Men worry a lot more about premature ejaculation than do women. Women realise that the penis isn't the only instrument of pleasure available to a couple in bed. Several surveys have shown that the majority of women wish men would stop worrying so much about who's coming when. They want men who understand the real value of sex: shared pleasure.

5. The (c) choice is the most likely form of humor to employ if you want to attract a woman. By making the object of your humor some neutral third party, you may create a subconscious bond between you and the woman. The two of you become "conspirators" linked against an "outsider."

6. (a) While men tend to view male-female relationships in sexual terms, women take a less single-minded position. They place high values on such things as friendship, sociability, intimacy, and sharing. Thus they view an evening out with a man as something to be enjoyed for its own sake and not as a mere prelude to a roll in the hay. Paradoxically, if you also take this less sexual view, you may be more likely to end up in bed with a woman.

7. (a) This is an extension of the answer to question 6. To most women, sex is more than a penis being shoved in a vagina. The cuddling that men see as foreplay is often viewed by women as an end in itself: something to be enjoyed for what it is and not something that necessarily must lead to copulation. When you begin to explore this approach to sex yourself you're likely to find that more women will appreciate your sensitivity.

8. (b) Unfortunately, women are not seers. Physical attractiveness plays a crucial part in initially attracting a woman to a man. Rigorous studies have shown that the more attractive you make yourself, the more likely you will be considered "sexually warm, sensitive, responsive, kind, interesting, strong, poised, and modest." So comb your hair and clean that gravy off your tie.

9. (b) The cliche "To know him is to love him" is right on the mark. Mady W. Segal, a sociologist, says, "The smaller the physical and functional distance between two people, the more likely they are to be attracted to each other." In other words, the office — not the singles bar — is the place to begin looking for women who like you. The grass will probably be greenest in your own backyard, among the women with whom you interact regularly.

10. (a) Among the less-touted findings of Master and Johnson was the fact that a woman most frequently achieves an orgasm when her clitoris is stimulated indirectly. The clitoris is not simply a stunted version of the male penis but an extraordinarily sensitive organ in its own right. Touching it directly with one or two fingers often breaks a woman's concentration.

11. (a) Playing hard to get works for both sexes. Psychologists call this the "gain phenomenon." A recent study concluded, "People are more attracted to a person who is initially punishing and then rewarding than to one who is always rewarding."

12. (b) A study has discovered that the more shapely a woman is, the more likely she will be to appreciate risque humor. (But there's a hitch you have to watch out for. The same study found that women who think of themselves as highly attractive are unlikely to find dirty jokes funny. So the prime candidates for your Rabelaisian sense of humor are well-stacked women who don't think of themselves as being extraordinarily beautiful.)

13. (b) As a general rule, most women like variety, lack of pattern, and surprise in sex. They tend to prefer not knowing what you might do next.

14. (b) If you fall asleep as soon as you come, it's no wonder that women don't like you. You're a boring slob.

15. (a) Once again we have to emphasise the great value that most women place on communication, sharing, and intimacy in their relations with men. Even in a one-night stand, the average woman wants to feel that the male she's with *cares* about her and the time they are spending together.

SCORING (IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE)
Give yourself five points for each correct answer. If you scored 50-75 points: Congratulations. You're the kind of man most women seem to be looking for. Of course, you're probably already well aware of that and have several ladies at this very minute dangling from your chandelier. But even if you don't, there's no cause for alarm. Keep hanging out; the women will find you.

25-45 points:
You're heading in the right direction, but, like most of us, you've got some rough edges that turn many women off. Check over your answers and see if there are specific areas where you consistently fall down. If you're the average man (as a score in this range indicates you may be), your main problem may be stepping into the "masculine" trap: embarrassment about sharing your feelings and discomfort about touching women in non-sexual situations.

0-20 points:
You may be an irredeemable lout; more likely, you're still hamstrung by the old slam-bam-thank-you-ma'am view of male-female relations. Intelligent women never liked that style of relationship, now they're saying so. Since women today have more freedom to choose the men they want to associate with, unless you can develop some personal sensitivity, they're less likely to choose you.

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Take one Kawasaki Z 1300, beef it up even more and you're looking at the . . .

KING OF THE ROAD

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY NOEL CHRISTENSEN

From a distance, "Gunshot" looks like any run-of-the-mill Kawasaki Z 1300. It's mean and gargantuan, and unflashy compared with other mega-powered bikes.

But the Z 1300 rules unchallenged as Australia's "King of the Road." It's enjoyed a reign of more than half a decade, despite the surge of power that has hallmarked top-of-the-line models during the past two years.

The Japanese and West Germans, while emphasising the safety virtues of their motorcycles in terms of road holding, braking and manoeuvrability, have tended to lightly brush over the awesome power output of their showroom models of more than 750cc. Yet, if you care to look among the statistics listing specifications of each model, you'll find buried there a notation on horsepower. West Germany's BMW draws the line at 100bhp; in all cases the Hondas, Yamahas, Suzukis and Kawasakis quote stables of 110 to 120bhp for their flagships — all except for the Z 1300. The six-cylinder Z 1300 tops the pile with a cruel 130bhp in its current model, a boost of 10bhp over the previous version, gained through the addition of electronic fuel-injection.

Now it's time for "Gunshot" to enter the scene with exhaust snarling and rubber burning. This little jigger has as many horses notched on its twist grip as any in the world — 170 randy-as-hell thoroughbred stallions.

A policeman with a warped sense of motorcycle megalomania and presumably a very shiny badge originally went to town on this very different 1980 Z 1300 in a very heavy-handed way. What he did was convert the overpowerful brute into a more muscle-bound monster by bringing it into line with today's Formula One engine limitations — 1.5 litres and turbo-charged — by enlarging the cylinders and bolting on the instant horsepower producer.

As it stood before its complex reformation, the standard Z 1300 (1286cc) engine was lion-hearted, having twin overhead camshafts, conventional two valves per cylinder and drawing its combustion mixture through a

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bank of three twin-choke constant-velocity carburettors.

In 1980, the year the *enfant terrible* "Gunshot" reached our shores, I personally timed a close friend in a Melbourne to Sydney Cannonball Run on such a bike. The Z 1300 departed the downtown Melbourne terminal of TAA at 10am, and was clocked in at Bondi Beach by 6pm — just eight breathtaking hours on the Hume Highway.

With four stops for fuel, including a lunch-time hamburger and cuppa at Tarcutta, NSW, and a five-minute chat to the Highway Patrol on top of Razorback Mountain for overtaking in a breakdown lane, actual time in the saddle was only seven hours and 30 minutes. Pretty quick for a Monday, and pretty lucky there was no licence confiscation along the way.

The rider saw 248 km/h on the clock with a little left in reserve and only ever registered under 160 km/h while passing through the built-up areas dotting the route. Effortless overtaking on the single track machine forced the hands of time to almost stand still, while no hill on that intercapital motorway forced the Z 300 to take a pull.

"Gunshot"' meanwhile was sitting on a showroom floor, like all Z 1300s behind an array of less powerful, but more marketable stable-mates, waiting to trap the keen eye of the law man. Eventually, he came, he saw and "Gunshot" conquered, and so began the saga of the most powerful bike on Australian roads, and maybe in the world if you bar hybrids with car engines as power plants.

There is a Cortina-engined Norton in Victoria which has plenty of power on tap. But does such a beast go around corners? And it is not unheard of for Volkswagen flat four donks to find their way into motorcycle frames, while some nuts in the USA have been known to put a V-8 Chev between their legs and pop a wheel on each end.

The current owner of "Gunshot" is Demas Tintner, who for 25 years has been a familiar figure in Sydney's "Motorcycle Alley", that conglomerate of bike shops in the Goulburn Street and Wentworth Avenue area of the city. The marriage of the hard-bitten mechanic and the maxi-powered motorcycle followed a long stand-off courtship over a period of years. "Gunshot" was disposed of by the original pistol-packing owner, but not before its emerald green livery was coated with black high gloss paint and the addition of a black half-fairing and engraved name tag on the tank cap. It languished for some time in the classified ads and dealers shops, but aroused Tintner's curiosity nonetheless.

"The price was always ridiculous to my way of thinking — I'd see it here and there around the traps, but they wanted too much money.

"Gunshot" at close quarters. The beefed up Kawasaki Z 1300 is the most powerful bike on the road in Australia.

"About the beginning of the year I saw it parked in Roger Vagg's yard on Parramatta Road — he specialises in hotted-up cars — so I thought I would drop in and see if I could bargain him down.

"He said to look at the bike for 15 minutes and come up with an offer. I did, and that's how I came by the beast."

The daunting task of fettling such a machine into the state of fine tuning that it requires for optimum performance is a job Tintner is well equipped for. Even so, determining the fine line for boost regulation of the turbo was a matter of trial and error — and occasional terror.

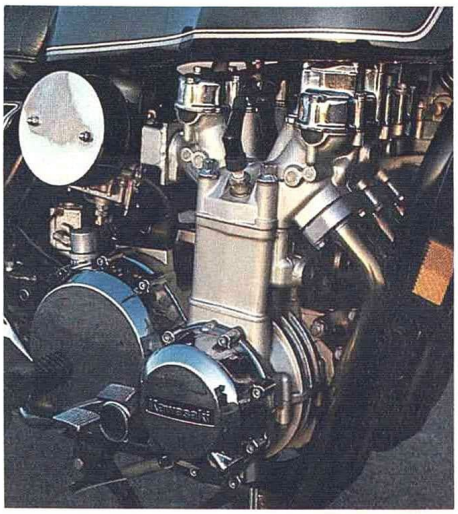
"The first time I took it out and gave it a handful, the fairing blew off at more than 200km/h — a screw broke and the whole thing went berserk, leaving bits of plastic and fibreglass scattered everywhere.

"It wasn't much of a fairing to start with, so it was not missed, although it did offer some protection from the gale force wind — as I found out the second time I went out for a serious ride.

"The strength of the slipstream got under the peak on my old helmet, popped the retaining strap undone and lifted the lid clean off my head. By the time I stopped to look for the helmet it came rolling past the bike and was pretty well worn down to the bottom layer of the outer shell."

Tintner, who had bought site unseen internally, on investigation discovered that the original pistons were replaced by a sextet of American-forged Wisecos which are 3mm wider than standard with the crowns turned down, lifting the overall capacity to 1442cc — which explains the Z 1500 badges on the side covers.

The Rotomaster turbo-charger, which force-feeds the cylinders with explosive fuel/air mixture, marries up with a Stromberg carburettor from a Triumph TR 4 sports car of the Sixties. Fully wastegated and with a single exhaust, "Gunshot" is lighter now with the addition of turbo. The compression ratio has been reduced to 9.5:1 from the original 10.5:1 and the boost is dialled in at 8lbs per square inch.



When all those accoutrements fire up as one, the bike develops an extra 50bhp — all of it in mid-range — resulting in a tyre-melting monster that wants to get away from you wherever it is not tightly enough reined.

"I've ridden one example at least of just about every bike on the road and for mid-range, nothing, but nothing, can touch it," enthuses the proud owner. "Standing quarter stuff is dicey as the rear tyre width does not allow me to launch it real hard . . . otherwise I'd be looking for a new rear.

"In standard trim the Z 1300 runs the strip in under 12 seconds, which means it's faster than any car registered for the road. The turbo and all the gear undoubtedly make it quicker, but if you're not spot on with the revs leaving the line it can either bog down because the turbo is not working, or the whole thing can go up in smoke. And that's when I lose heart.

"It is 'the roll-on king' when the turbo chimes in at 3500 with maximum boost at 6500. Then it's all the way to the red line at 9500."

First gear is good for 100km/h, second 150km/h, and from there on up there are three more cogs to call on as "Gunshot" goes haywire to a peak of 260. But it's not terminal speed that makes this bike what it is, it's all about how quick the speedo needle goes once around the clock — there just ain't none quicker.

In mid-winter, Tintner was spending his hours perfecting the tuning of the bike even further — a little more boost here, a little less there — while playing around with carburettor settings.

"She'll come good, real good if I spend enough time fiddling with it. All I'm trying to do is to get it to run more cleanly after it starts up first thing in the morning. I don't think more horsepower is required.

"Come summer and I'm going to do some serious riding, day trips and that. It should be fun. Then I could possibly get it out of my system and pass it on to someone else; that's how I feel about the bike at the moment.

"Who knows, something more powerful, might come along . . . but somehow I don't think so." O+

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Here's your chance to win a superb top-of-the-line Sanyo sound system, including amplifier, tuner, tape deck, compact disc player, turntable, cabinet and speakers, valued at $2222. The Sanyo Hi-Fi System 1540, featuring the finest in audio

E SOUND SYSTEM!

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WIN THE ULTIMATE SOUND SYSTEM!

The Sanyo System 1540 is no ordinary hi-fi package. To start with, it accommodates the future of sound technology with the inclusion of a compact disc player. A 16-selection programmable auto search system for fast location, micro-computer assisted fast push controls and one-touch programming to control the sequence of tracks are just a few of the Sanyo compact disc player's remarkable features.

The 50 Watts per channel amplifier features a five-band graphic equaliser and a superbly uncomplicated "direct call function" which allows the user to simply press the button to choose between radio, tape, record or compact disc. The System 1540 tuner combines touch tuning, station scanning, preset for AM and FM stations, digital frequency readout and signal strength meter. Sanyo's tape deck includes every valuable tape function — logic control, dolby, record mute switch, left and right microphone sockets, headphone socket and two level meters — and allied with a three-way three-speaker system it produces magnificent sound quality. The speakers feature cone drivers made from polypropylene, an incredibly durable substance which allows the cone to move exactly as the music tells it to without buzzing or rippling. Result: tighter bass and more silence between notes. Separate attenuator controls for midrange and tweeter take the Sanyo speaker's performance into a class of its own.

The System 1540 is housed in a beautifully finished woodgrain cabinet with adjustable shelves and glass doors — an attractive addition to any lounge room. It represents the best that the prestigious Sanyo company has to offer in sound reproduction. To be in the running for this fabulous home entertainment package, simply fill in the accompanying coupon, answer the three questions, and get your entry in without delay. The first correct entry drawn by the editor of *Australian Penthouse* will win the Sanyo System 1540.

Clip and send this completed coupon to "Sanyo Sound Competition," *Australian Penthouse* Magazine, PO Box 42, Cammeray NSW 2062. The answers to the questions can be found in the preceeding copy. Only one entry per person is allowed.

1. **What component of the Sanyo System 1540 accommodates the future of sound technology?**

   _____

2. **What is the Sanyo amplifier's power output per channel?**

   _____

3. **From what substance are the Sanyo speakers' cone drivers made?**

   _____

Name: _____

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Permit No. TC84/1863 Issued under the Lotteries & Art Unions Act

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Your entry and participation must be on the official entry form or a facsimile thereof. Only one entry per person is allowed.

Entry and participation in the competition is completely open to all Australian residents other than employees of *Australian Penthouse* and their families and Sanyo Australia Pty Ltd and their families.

One correct entry will be drawn from all the correct entries received. That entry will be the winner.

Closing date for competition entries will be last mail on Friday, November 30, 1984. The winner will be announced in a forthcoming issue of *Australian Penthouse*.

The winning entrant, by entering this competition, shall be deemed to agree to accept public acknowledgement of his winning entry in person and further to the making of such public appearances as the promoters shall reasonably require.

On all questions, disputes or matters arising in relation to the contest, the editor's decision will be final. No correspondence will be entered into and entry in the competition indicates acceptance of all rules and conditions.

This competition is brought to you by Sanyo Australia Pty Ltd and *Australian Penthouse* magazine.

You two can own a 4WD!

Toyota 4 Runner. Run smooth

There is now a 4WD that you the realist can feel comfortable with, and you the escapist can go nuts about.

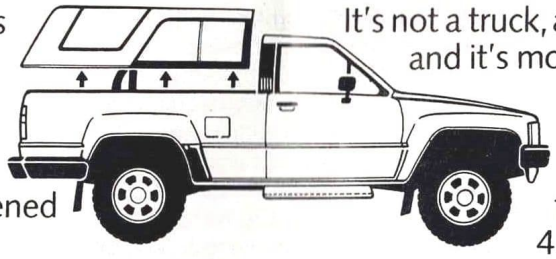
It's not a weekender, it's a 7-days-a-week vehicle, built to run smooth in the City, wild in the bush.

The new Toyota 4 Runner is ***all*** new. Inside, you'll find it's sedan comfort, with good space for five adults, front reclining seats, excellent stereo, power rear window and power steering.

The only clues as to what you do on weekends are the two gear-sticks and the dashboard altimeter and clinometer that read-off your height

in the City, wild in the bush.

and angle of climb. 4 Runner has the Toyota HiLux pedigree of a true 4WD, with a Toyota Super Responsive Engine – petrol or diesel. And the whole back canopy is detachable, for a heightened sense of freedom.



So if you set off to the milk bar and end up at Marble Bar, it isn't because you're lost.

It's because you've found the only vehicle that truly leaves the options up to you.

The 4 Runner won't let you down in public, and won't quit on you in the bush.

It's not a truck, and it's not just a city sedan, and it's more than a 4WD.

The 4 Runner is all of those, in a very individual blend. And incidentally, the escapist won't care, but 4 Runner's price will be of considerable interest to the realist in you!

TOYOTA

Oh what a feeling!

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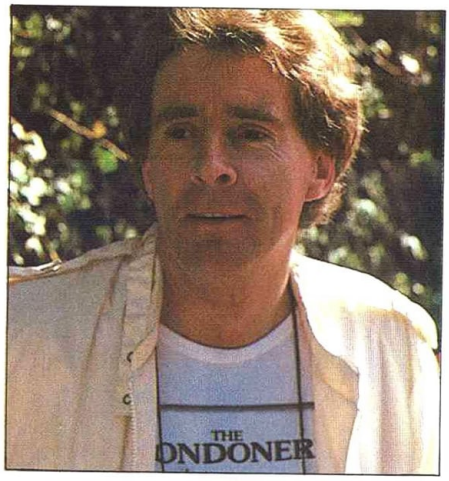
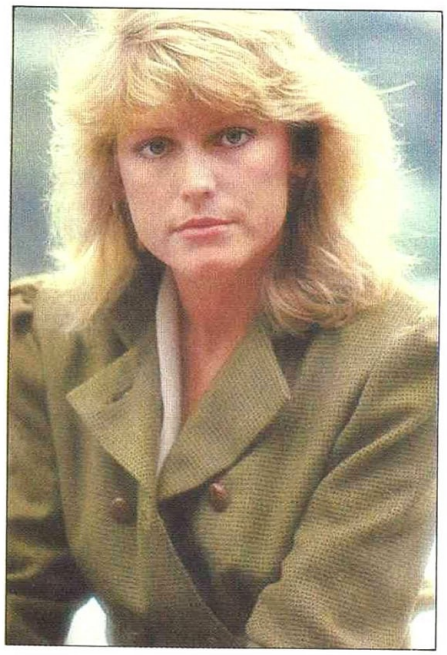
PENTHOUSE PEOPLE



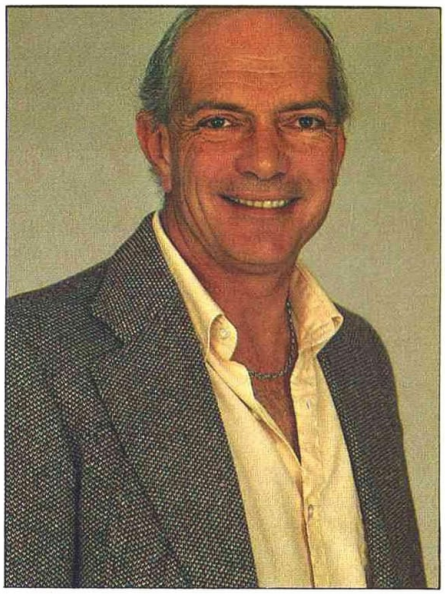
CHRIS THOMSON

Sydney bus drivers should take a bow. It's partly due to them that talented film and television drama director Chris Thomson chooses to live nowhere else. When Thomson first came to Australia he noticed that the buses actually waited for people who were running to catch them. That impressed him. So did "the climate, the standard of living, the excitement of the place and the food." And so, after coming from England to work here for only four months, Thomson decided to make Australia his permanent home. Thomson grew up in New Zealand, and developed his interest in film largely in defiance of his father, who thought the movies a waste of time. After graduating from university Thomson got a job in a small regional TV station in Dunedin. After two years, and with some rudimentary directing skills under his belt, Thomson left Dunedin for England where he got a job with the BBC as a director's assistant, worked with some of the best directors in TV, and learned "a hell of a lot." He struggled for some time, but received some critical acclaim in 1974 after he directed a TV play that he'd written himself. In 1977 Thomson came to Australia and decided to stay, for a long time working for the ABC. Since then he's won numerous television awards, including a Penguin as Best Director for the episode "Cold Comfort" in the series *Spring And Fall.* The episode also won a Logie as the Best Single Play of 1981. Thomson left the ABC after working on the series *1915*, doing some writing and script editing before directing the mini-series *Waterfront.* Since *Waterfront* Thomson has put together *The Last Bastion*, presently being seen on TV screens around the country. At the moment he's working on his first feature film, *The Empty Beach.* based on the book by *Penthouse* contributor Peter Corris. As for the future, Thomson has no visionary plans at all. He doesn't see himself joining any headlong Hollywood rush; he's enjoying life too much here for that.



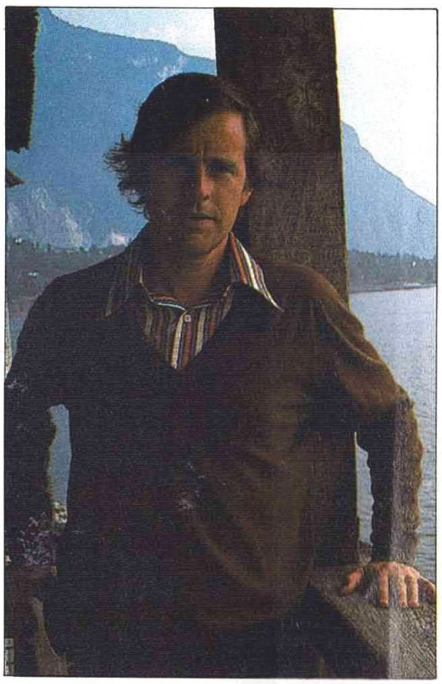
CHARM LEE

Actress Charm Lee says she could fill a book with the bad jokes people have cracked about her unique Christian name, although she'd never think of publishing it . . . not that she's got anything against bad jokes. In fact, Charm has found them to be a particularly lucrative commodity. Lee and her partner David Hansen have recently produced a series of sick humor compilations which have turned a one-off publishing venture into a booming business. It all began with *Dingo Lingo,* a paperback collection of completely tasteless, but well-timed dingo jokes. That little book sold out fast, and prompted the pair to put together a series of similar quickies like the recent *Raiders Of The Lost Olympics.* Their Nuwave Publishing company has expanded rapidly and now produces a wide variety of books including children's stories and a manual on Chinese herbal medicine. Lee's personal involvement in the promotion of these projects has made a major contribution to their success. Without sullying the non-sexist stance taken by this column it must be mentioned that a quick appraisal of her good looks make it obvious that it would be difficult to say "no" to anything Charm Lee suggested, be it business or otherwise. The former Coffs Harbor Miss Bananabird titleholder has played numerous parts in local television dramas, the most recent of which was a spot in the new series *Special Force.* Lee says she has managed to sandwich her publishing commitments between her acting assignments without either profession suffering. "My business is my security, but acting is my passion and I can see no reason why I can't be an actress and a businesswoman at the same time," proclaims the aptly named Charm Lee.



PETER WHERRETT

Commenting on his rise to national celebrity status as a result of the ABC's tremendously successful motoring series *Torque*, Peter Wherrett pulls no punches: "The TV star thing was decidedly unpleasant for myself and my family for years. Everyone is naive about what's going to happen when they break into television, but when you're talking about cars, people want to argue with you all the time. I'm getting used to it now, but I still can't say I enjoy it." The doyen of Australian motoring pundits' attitude to the trappings of celebrity is best summed up in his response to being offered a listing in *Debrett's*, the snotty form guide for high achievers: "What a huge wank. I really have no interest whatever in that sort of thing." If you're getting the impression that Wherrett is a straight talker, don't fight it. In fact, that's precisely the quality which has made him the best in the country at what he does. Wherrett says the best thing about his long association with the ABC was the knowledge he gained of TV production, which allows him to produce his own segment for the Nine Network's *Today* show along with an assortment of training films. He also appears regularly on Nine's *Wide World Of Sport* and on Radio 2GB in Sydney, a slot which has allowed him to diversify into all aspects of recreation in Australia. "That's very important to me," he says seriously. "I've always disliked being pigeon-holed as a motoring writer." That's why he did a six-part ABC series on energy conservation called *Balance Of Power* and it's also why he's just finished writing a screenplay for a documentary feature film called *Birtles And The Sundowner,* for which he's currently chasing up finance. "I see myself basically as a writer — whether rightly or wrongly, I don't know — but I've always strived to improve my lot, so I'm going to throw myself into that for a while."



NICHOLAS HASLUCK

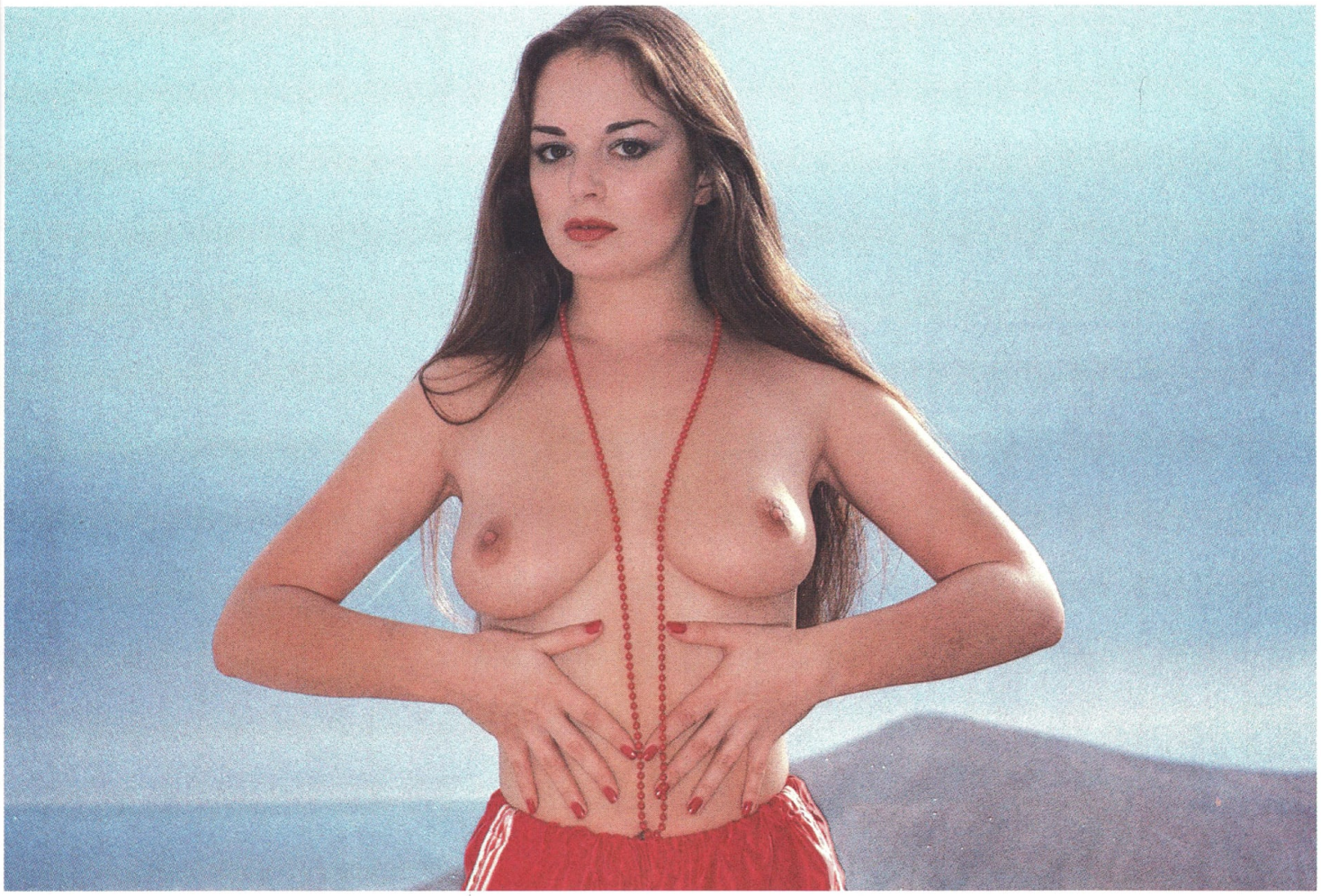
As a lawyer, novelist and administrator, Nicholas Hasluck wears a variety of hats with apparent ease and obvious distinction. The son of the former Australian Foreign Affairs minister and Governor-General Sir Paul Hasluck (himself a prolific author), Hasluck has carried on the literary tradition of the family with the publication of poetry, short stories and four novels. His most recent effort, entitled *The Bellamine Jug,* is a complicated academic thriller which spans a period from the early 17th Century to the present. Born in Canberra in 1942, Hasluck studied law at the University of Western Australia and Oxford. After completing his studies he worked as an editorial assistant in Fleet Street, before returning to Perth where he now practices as a civil litigation lawyer and is involved in legal aspects of Western Australia's mining industry. Hasluck says he finds his legal and literary careers quite compatible, and his latest novel draws much of its inspiration and many of its characters from his legal background. He sees the book as a progression in terms of style and structure from his previous stories, and it certainly shows a sophisticated approach to the novel, incorporating action, suspense and some provocative ideas which reflect his legal training. The novel can be read as either an academic thriller or as an examination of some basic moral choices. Hasluck is not the sort of novelist who agonises over his efforts, saying that he finds the act of writing a pleasurable one and particularly enjoys researching his books. The former deputy chairman of the Australia Council, Hasluck is currently adapting an earlier novel, *The Blue Guitar,* into a screenplay.

RENEE GEYER

A spate of gutsy, vibrant female performers has lately emerged as a talented force to be reckoned with on the local music scene. They are not proving for the first time that our female performers can do a lot more than bang a tambourine and look pretty. They are consolidating an example set over the last decade or so by Renee Geyer. The big white girl with the big black voice played leader of the pack in establishing that not all girls like putting on silk jersey jumpsuits and crooning MOR ditties on the club circuit. Renee says she's always had a ballsy voice. As a kid in Sydney's eastern suburbs she competed in a singing competition with a vocal rendition reminiscent of a pigtailed Louis Armstrong. She lost out to a little tyke with a voice like Julie Andrews. She began singing in a Bondi wine bar at 17, supporting herself with secretarial jobs. It wasn't long before her voice became her meal ticket and throughout the Seventies, although things weren't always easy, she established herself as one of Australia's most successful singers with a string of hits that included "It's A Man's World", "Am I Heading In The Right Direction", "Say I Love You" and "Stares And Whispers." During this time she knocked on doors in America and received airplay but her raunchy style couldn't be pigeon-holed and packaged there and she hasn't had a hit so far. The last 18 months have proven a watershed in Renee's career. She parted amicably with her manager Ray Evans and the Mushroom label to look after her own affairs. Early this year she teamed with Stephen McLean, writer and co-producer of *Starstruck,* to present *Soul Cha-Cha,* a singing, dancing and joking stage hit in Sydney that showcased the multiplicity of her talents. She has a small part in Paul Cox's latest film *My First Wife* and plans are underway for another McLean show which will further extend her dramatic abilities. Renee is currently working with award-winning producers Ricky Fataar and Mark Moffatt and the results of the alliance will be heard soon.

PENTHOUSE INTERNATIONAL

AUSTRIA
KATERINA



Austrian beauty Katerina Weiss won't swap the charms of her home city Vienna for any place on Earth. The 22-year-old has been offered modelling contracts in London and New York and she concedes that they're nice places to visit, but that's about it. Katerina is a music student — one who is more content waltzing the Blue Danube than her Matilda, it would seem.

PHOTOS BY RICHARD SPENCE

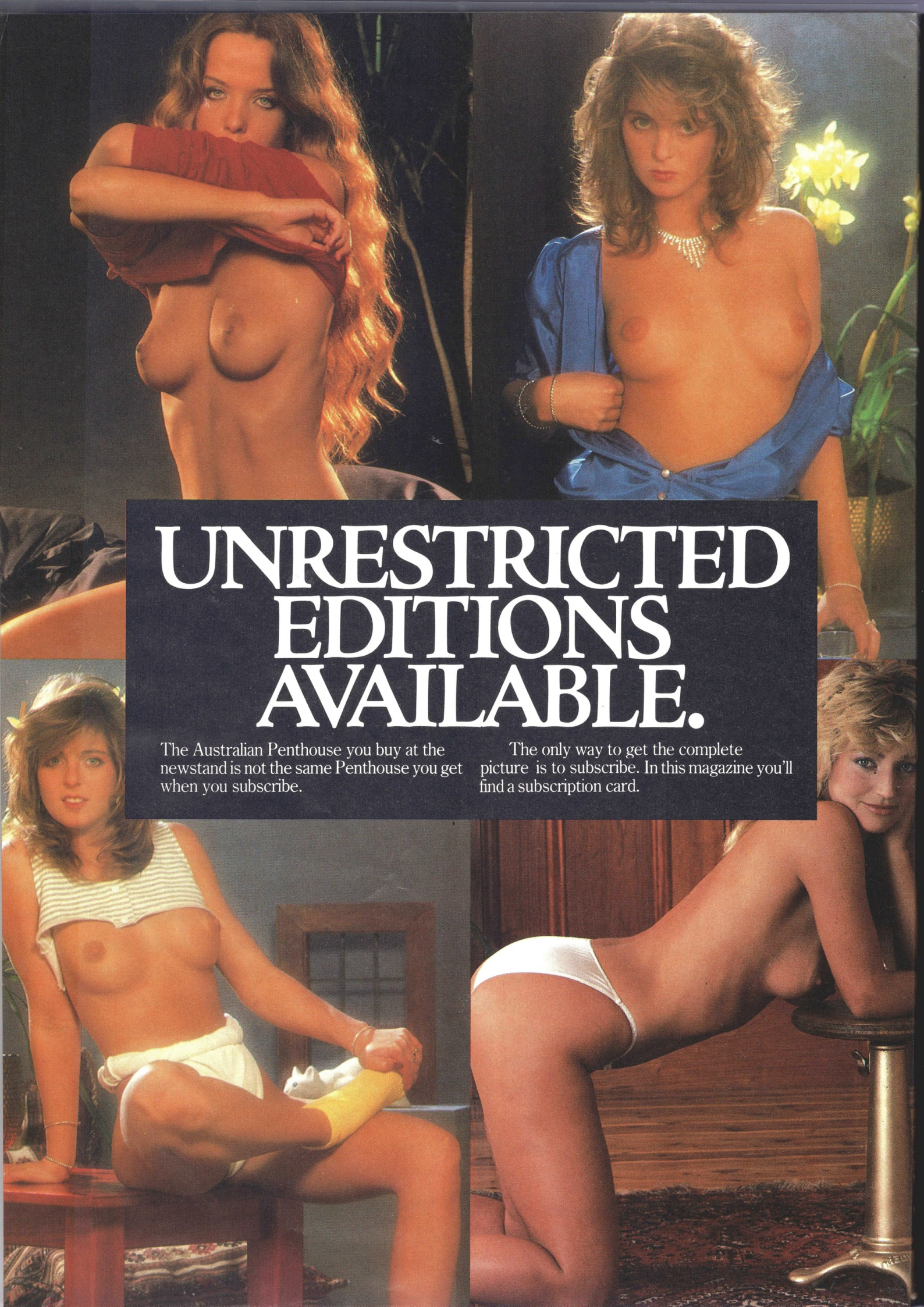
PENTHOUSE INTERNATIONAL

PENTHOUSE INTERNATIONAL

Well toned secretary Mara Scalia is a senorina who takes things very seriously. The 21-year-old from Bologna was so serious about improving her fitness and strength that she took up competitive weight-lifting. Now she's working hard improving her clean and jerk and her squat for the forthcoming Italian women's weight-lifting championships. She's not worrying about her snatch though; judges acknowledge she's already got the best in the country.

PHOTOS BY PETER LEESON

ITALY
MARA



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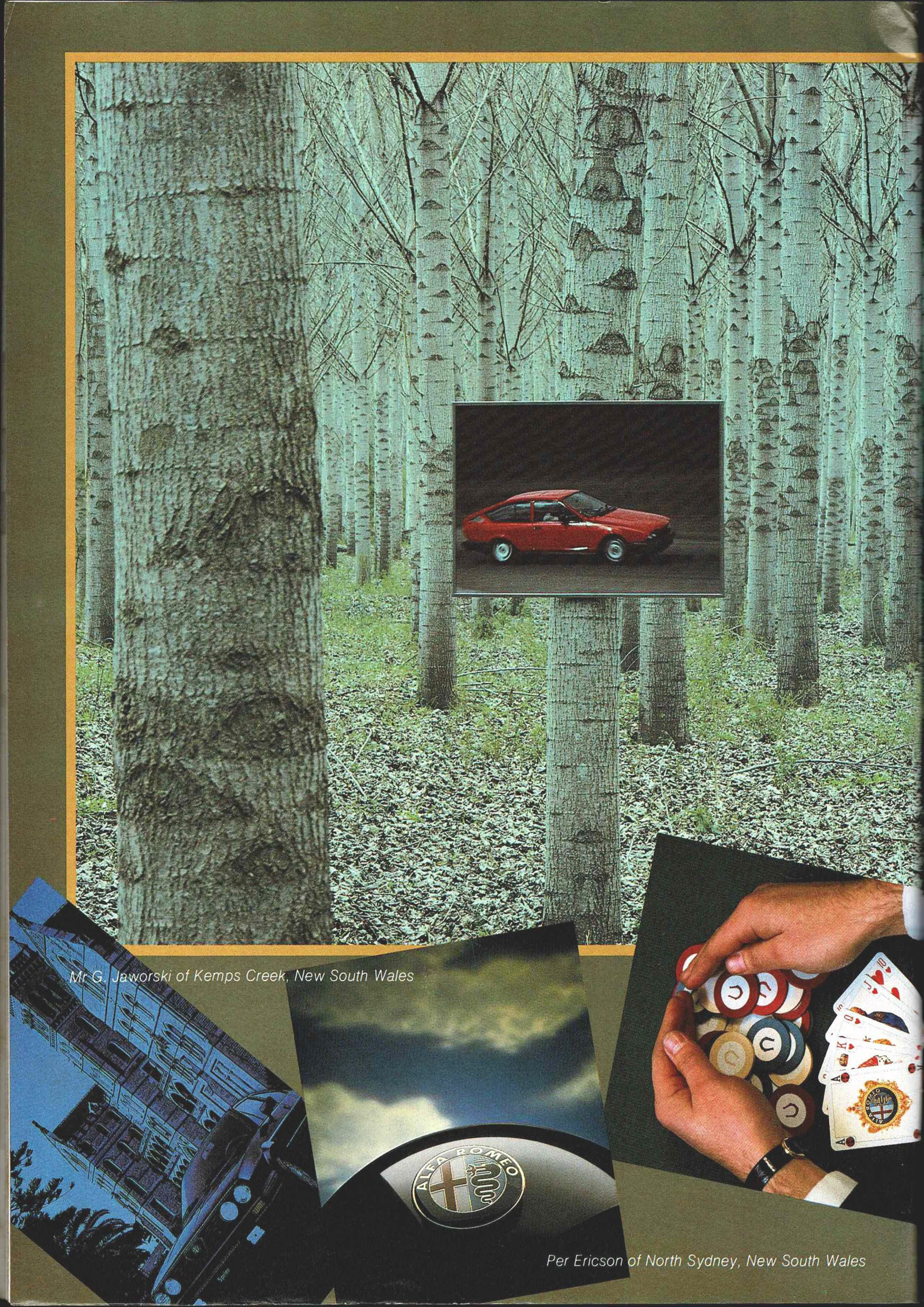


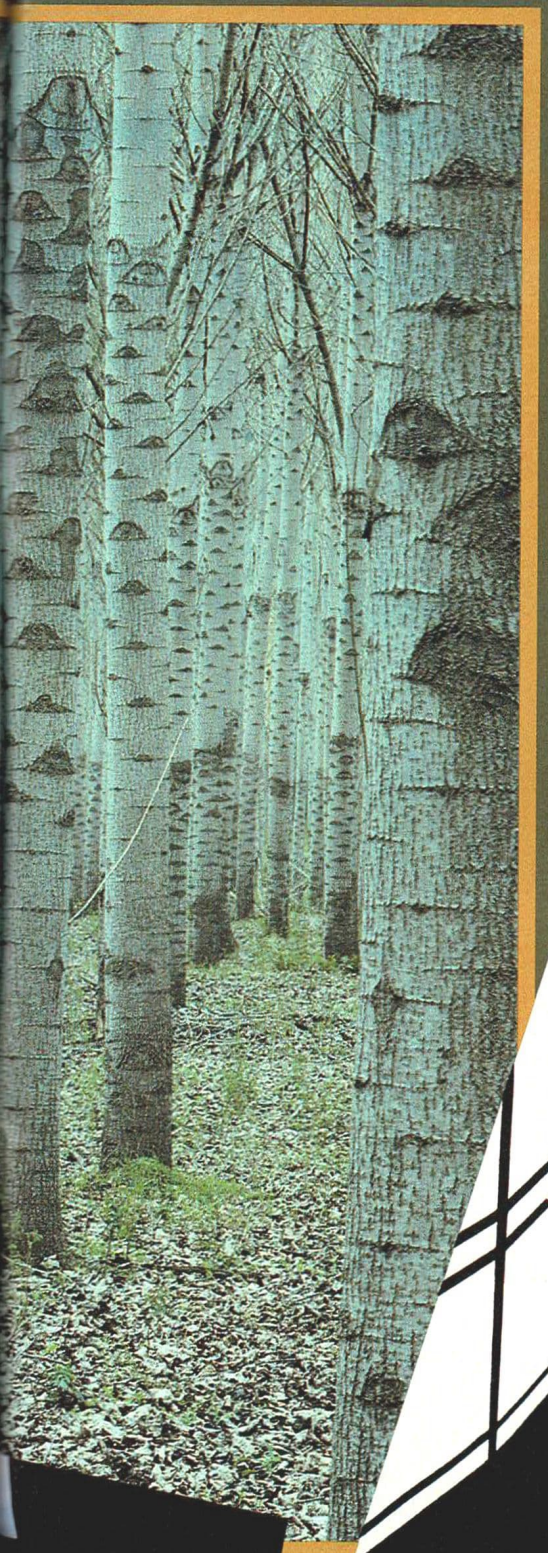
Mr G. Jaworski of Kemps Creek, New South Wales

Per Ericson of North Sydney, New South Wales

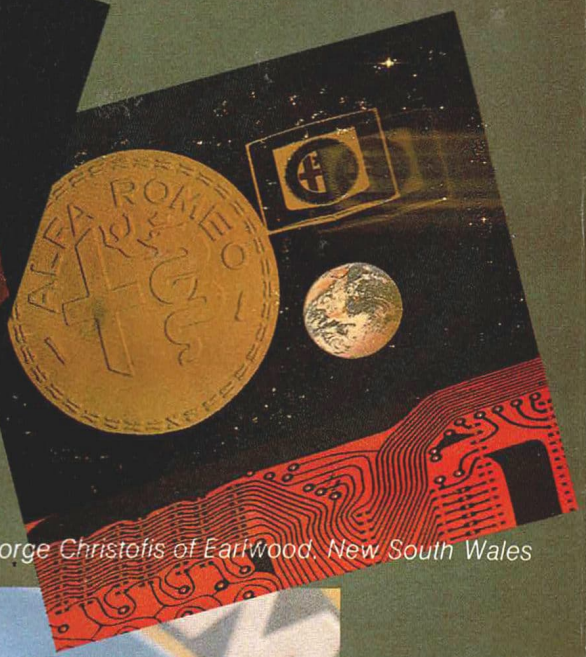
Alfa representative Tony Perri congratulates winner Greg McBean, with a little help from Penthouse *Pets Debra Braithwaite and Sue Francis.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...

The winner of the *Australian Penthouse* Alfa Romeo Canon Photo Contest is Sydney photographer Greg McBean. McBean's unusual photographic juxtaposition — the portrait of a red Alfa in a poplar grove — wins him a magnificent silver Alfa GTV 2.0 and a comprehensive range of Canon camera equipment. McBean was delighted when he was informed that his entry had won Australia's richest photographic contest. "I am a confirmed Alfa fanatic," he said. "Winning this car has fulfilled one of my major ambitions." Alfa's representative on the judging panel, National Sales and Marketing Manager Chris Osborne, commented that the high standard of entries had made the decision a difficult one. The winner said his entry was an attempt to express the sophisticated European style of the Alfa in a subtle but effective manner. McBean's winning photograph and the shots which accompany it on this page show the high standard of photography which typified the contest.



Craig D. Sillitoe of Northcote, Victoria



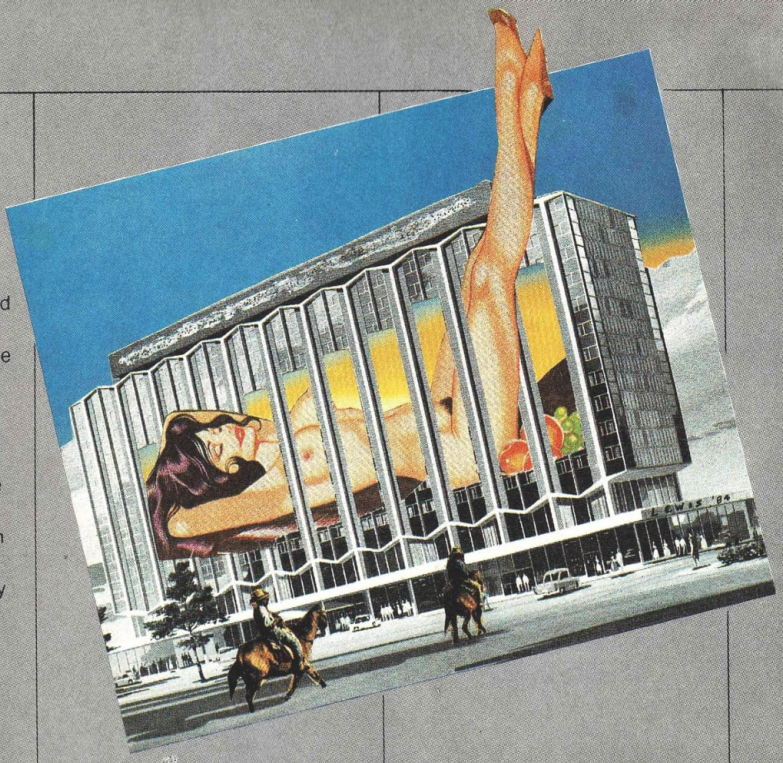
George Christofis of Earlwood, New South Wales

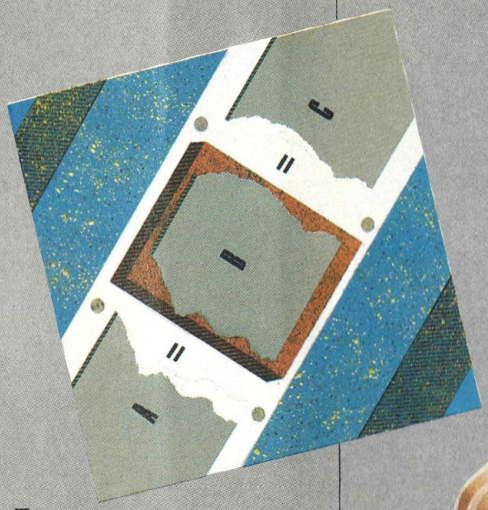
M. Del-Grande of Launceston, Tasmania

Charles Zuber of Wynnum, Queensland

LOOSE ENDS

It could only happen in the US of A. An American newspaper recently reported the case of the Texas apartment residents who were forced to choose between their homes and their clothes. New owners of the apartment block decreed that clothing would be banned within the confines of the complex, meaning that no-one mooching around the garden or running out to pick up their morning newspaper was allowed to be wearing a stitch. Residents were downright 'ornery about the arrangement, not because they were embarrassed about being in the raw . . . they just didn't like being pushed around. Which may go to prove that everything really is BIG in Texas.

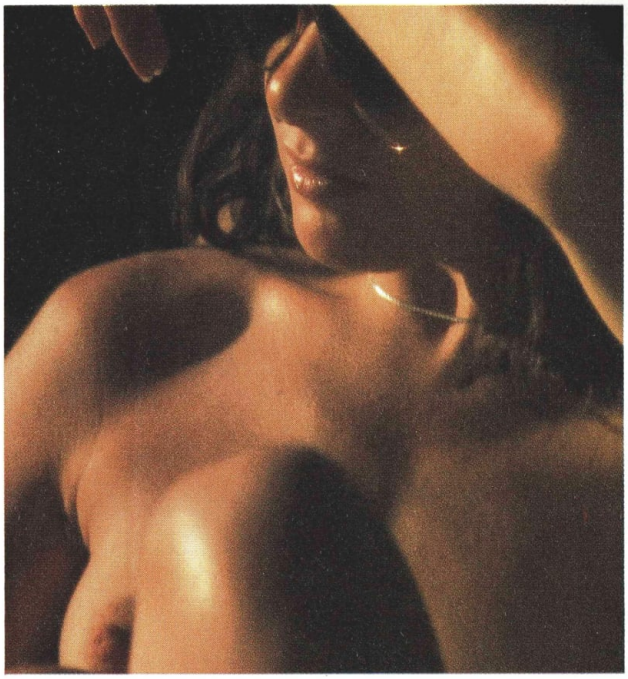




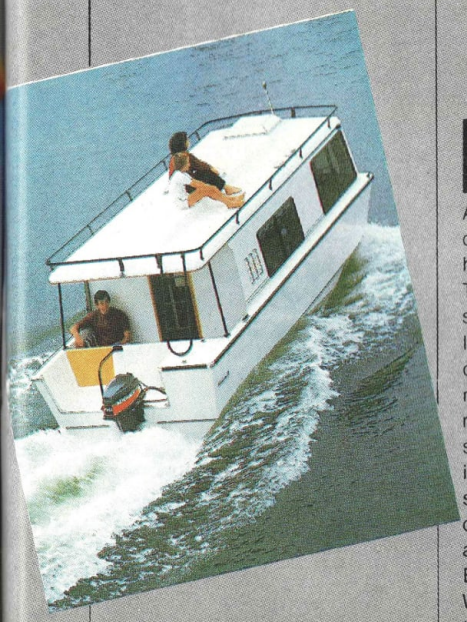
If some fink doesn't pinch your VCR and you get to enjoy the years of entertainment you shelled out for, chances are some day you'll be needing a video splicer kit for your tapes. The newly released VSK lets you repair your own tapes if they become damaged or twisted and also allows you to do your own video editing. The comprehensive kit sells for $19.50 and includes instructions and enough stuff to repair 250 tapes. It beats the hell out of paying the $7 some repair places charge per tape. Stockist enquiries on (02) 745 3792.

It would be a crying shame to let this picture go to waste. It's a promo for the women's undies whiz company Formfit. They've just released their spring/summer collection of sexy scanties and suggest that male frilly fanciers would like a look as a gift idea for her indoors come Christmas, birthday, anniversary or whatever. If you want to follow it up, the raunchy range is available at department stores and lingerie shops nationwide.

Someone acquired a $3500 Sansui sound system package for $2.95 last July. Deadset. He lives in North Balgowlah, NSW, and he goes by the name of Brad Jansson — aka the winner of our Sansui Hi-Fi Competition. He wins top-of-the-line stereo gear for his home and for his car and right now he's wired for sound in style. Bargains like that cost $3.40 these days, but "you pays your money and you takes your chance." A bit of inside info — it's a very good chance. Keep it quiet.



It's a very limp pun, but this patriotism thing has gone a wee bit pasta joke. The Vetta Company is marketing pasta pieces shaped like Australia, complete with little pasta divisions for the states plus Tasmania dangling off the end. It's called Aussieronie (Al Dente's cousin?) and it should go down a treat with a nice Vegemite and choko sauce and a couple of Iced Vo Vos for afters. On sale this month. Bewdy.



Here's one for the "why didn't I think of that" department. A Clever Dick Australian has designed a combination caravan/houseboat. The Williams 26ft Trailer Houseboat is a stable, safe road traveller that can be launched on H_2O without any complex preparation from one mode to the other. On water it's remarkably fuel efficient; it sleeps six to eight and you can fit out its interior yourself or purchase it stylishly complete with all mod cons. It looks like being a winner at home and as an Aussie export. Enquiries answered by Country Wide Marketing in Queensland, (075) 32 8799.

PENTHOUSE POLAROID PHOTO COMPETITION

How about some more entries for the Polaroid Competition? Although the standard of entries received has in no way declined, the numbers of entries has taken a tumble. As well as winning a Polaroid SLR 680 camera or a 35mm AutoProcess system for the photographer, entries in the competition offer the subjects a chance to be a *Penthouse* centrefold and that carries a modelling fee of $5000 and a one in 12 chance to win more than $100,000 in prizes as *Penthouse* Pet Of The Year. Summer's on the way, so there's no excuse for anyone to stay under wraps. Get snapping with a friend.

All of which in no way detracts from this month's winning entry from Max Coffey of Norton Summit in South Australia. Max's shot of girlfriend Rose wins him a choice of Polaroid packages. If you reckon you're up to *Penthouse* scratch, send us one or a few photos taken on any film (Polaroid or otherwise) and put your photographic talent where your mouth is.

Please fill in this confidential form and return with your entry to: *Australian Penthouse,* PO Box 42, Cammeray 2062.

Name of photographer: _____

Address of photographer: _____

_____ Telephone number of photographer: _____

Name of subject: _____ Telephone number of subject: _____

I (the subject)..... of .....
am aware that my photograph has been submitted as an entry in the Polaroid SLR 680 competition. If my entry should win, I have no objection to it being published in *Australian Penthouse.* I am 18 years old or over.

Signature of subject:..... Date.....

Signature of witness:..... Date.....

Sydney's Bobbie Wallbank

COMING IN DECEMBER AUSTRALIAN PENTHOUSE

Industrial Espionage — Is the espionage "scare" for real, or is it an elaborate hoax allowing the corporate security industry to cash in on executive paranoia? *Penthouse* exposes the dirty tricks played on businessmen by unscrupulous operators in the strange and sordid world of bugging and debugging, telephone tapping and undercover penetration. This eye-opening article will change your ideas about what "security" means in the Eighties.

The Bald Facts — There's no-one quite so desperate as the man who's losing his hair, and over the years a lot of sharp operators have recognised that fact. They're still out there in the marketplace fleecing the balding, but the entire hair treatment/replacement industry could be turned upside-down in the near future. Important medical breakthroughs are imminent in the search for a baldness cure that works. *Penthouse* takes a look at what's available now, and what the future holds.

David Combe Interview — As a result of his relationship with expelled KGB agent Ivanov the controversial former federal secretary of the Labor Party was blacklisted by government ministers he'd once called friends and accused of a variety of transgressions. Then he was cleared of any wrongdoing by a Royal Commission. Combe speaks frankly for the first time about the events which rocked the nation and blighted his life and makes the most of the opportunity to make some accusations of his own.

How To Pick Up Girls — There may be more to life than meeting beautiful women and taking them home to bed, but whatever it is humorist Colin Bowles hasn't discovered it. This hilarious guide offers some ingenious ideas on how to get your end in with a minimum of effort.

Pet Of The Month — Bobbie Wallbank tells us she's a star gazer. The 23-year-old Aboriginal dance student firmly believes in extraterrestrial life forms and says she would like nothing better than a close encounter. Get ready for Bobbie and other heavenly bodies in December *Penthouse.*

THE BIG PINCH

Continued from page 103

it and making him look more normal, younger and afraid. "I didn't think the thing would get to production. I was just after the development dough, thought I might get a first draft fee from some producer, you know."

Fuller nodded.

"Well, it all took off. It moved too fast for me — suddenly it was final draft and then we were in pre-production. I didn't know what to do. I wouldn't really have hurt Jardie — you know that."

I nodded this time.

"I just wanted to stop the bloody thing. I tried to make a lot of changes but Jardie and McLeish blocked a lot of them. If we make it like this," he tapped the script, "someone'll spot it for sure. It'll be the finish of me." He mustered a little spirit and looked at Fuller. "You too, probably," he said.

I drank some of McLeish's good whisky and thought about it. Space was flicking through the book. There was a picture of the author on the back cover — he looked youngish, thin and thoughtful.

"Why didn't you get on to this Hyclef bloke? Do some sort of deal with him?"

"I thought of that," Space said. "I gave it a try, but the firm had gone out of business. I asked around but no-one'd ever heard of Hyclef. It could've been a pseudonym. I don't know."

Fuller was sinking whisky and looking desperate; he could see his investment slipping away. I let it slip a little and then cleared my throat noisily.

"Missing persons is one of my specialities."

Fuller took the biggest punt of his life and they went on with the shoot while I looked for Hyclef. I found him teaching school out past Broken Hill. He'd never had another word published — the collapse of MacRobertsons had hit him for six. He was a nice, naive man, disappointed, and in his thirties. He was thrilled with the deal Fuller and Space worked out with him for the film "based on" his novel. There was talk of a re-issue of the book by another house, with Kurt Butler's craggy features on the cover.

The film finished on schedule and just over budget. It did good business and they even found a small part for me. I'm the one who shouts "Look out!" when Dick Balmain sidesteps death by inches up in Centrepoint Tower.

CREDITS

Cover and centrefold: Photography by Chris Dickson; Hair styled by Maria Schiavetti; Make-up by Kim Bowen. Rugs from Hamilton and Beech; Persian pillows from Azaz; Jewellery courtesy of The Old Ark; Furniture from Bryce; Clothing from Exacto. Shoes supplied by Raymond Castles, Sydney Melbourne and Auckland.

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